

HOME WITH THE HOOPING-COUGH;

OR,

HOW THEY MADE THE BEST OF IT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MARY POWELL."

CHAPTER V.

"WHAT an immense time you have been away, Blanche!" said Fulk, feeling himself rather neglected, the morning after Tom's visit. "What have you been about?"

"Mrs. Pitt is here," said Blanche.

"What a bore! Is she gone?"

"No. I came up to know if you would like to see her."

"And I have been waiting ever so long to talk over my prize essay with you. What makes her stay so long?"

"She knew that you boys had to live principally on light puddings just now, and, thinking you might be tired of the old ones, she came to tell us of a new one."

"Hurrah!" said Mervyn.

"Come, that was kind of her," said Fulk. "Are we going to have it?"

"Yes. I have been making it under her instructions."

"What is it called?"

"Nonpareil."

"What is it made of?"

"Ah, that's telling, and I am not going to tell."

"You wretch."

"No, she is very good," cried Mervyn, "and was making us a pudding while you thought she was neglecting us."

"Why could not cook make it?"

"Because it required to be made with extra particular care. Indeed, 'ladies' fingers' form one of the ingredients."

"You make me quite hungry, Blanche."

"Then hungry you must be. Will you see Mrs. Pitt or not?"

"Well, if she particularly wishes it——"

"Particularly wishes to see a set of boys with the hooping-cough! Nonsense. Say yes or no before I count five, or I'll go and tell her you can't make up your mind. One, two, three, four——"

"Blanche, don't be stupid. Let her come up then. One gets so little change now, that even Mrs. Pitt is better than nothing."

"Very well. Mr. Fulk Howard's compliments to Mrs. Pitt, and she is to come up. He gets so little change now, that even she is better than nothing."

Away ran Blanche, and Mervyn looking after her, and then at Fulk, said doubtfully: "I wonder if she'll say that?"

"Of course not," said Fulk, setting himself and his surroundings to rights a little.

Presently in came Mrs. Pitt, looking as amused as if Blanche had literally repeated Fulk's speech. Perhaps she had heard it through the open door! We should be careful not to say things we mind being overheard.

Mrs. Pitt had been many years a widow, and always wore black. She carried a little leathern bag, in which she had brought ladies' fingers. She inquired of Fulk and his brothers how they were, in a way that showed her to be very kind-hearted.

"When my boys had the hooping-cough," said she, "I told them I should take particular notice whether they made the best of it."

"And did they make the best of it?"

"Yes, I certainly think they did. They were patient, contented, and obedient to orders."

"How did they employ themselves?" asked Mervyn.

"I received a letter one day, asking me to contribute fancy work to a charity bazaar for the benefit of the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Society. I said, 'What do the people think I'm made of? I haven't a hundred hands like Briareus, nor as many eyes as a spider; I've no time to make pincushions and pen-wipers.' Sam said, 'Mamma, may I make them a brig?' 'Oh yes, my dear, if you've a mind to,' said I. So he set to work and made a brig, painted the hull, set up the masts, made the yards and sails and all the rigging, named it the 'Jemima,' in honour of me, and it sold for thirty shillings. A sea captain bought it for his little boy, saying it was the completest thing he ever saw in his life. There wasn't a single mistake in it.'

"That was nice," said Mervyn.

"And Joe made a railway train that moved by clockwork in the inside of the engine. It sold for five pounds, because it was on a new principle, which an engineer said was very ingenious; and it pleased him so much that it afterwards led to his being taken on by Mr. Brunel."

"That was making the best of his illness," cried Fulk with interest.

"Tell us some more about your son Sam, please," said Lewis eagerly. "I suppose he was always fond of the sea?"

"Yes, always after he had stayed with his uncle William, who taught him how to box the compass, and a good many other nautical things. Can you mend your own stockings?"

"I? No, indeed," said Lewis.

"Sam learned to do so, and to sew on his buttons. Emily gave him a nice little housewife, and Sophia gave him Basil Hall's 'Fragments of Voyages and Travels,' and a little mariner's compass hardly bigger than a seal to fasten to his watch ribbon."

"Would such a little compass be any use?" said Lewis.

"Yes; such a one has saved a boat's crew from being lost, which was why Sophia gave it him."

"Where is he now?"

"Somewhere between Aden and Bombay. In his last letter he gave me an account of Moses's Wells in the deserts of Arabia. He says there are only seven wells now; the rest are choked with sand. He says, 'Tell Willy if he wants to be a sailor he must be well up in arithmetic, especially Euclid; and all other branches of education will turn out very useful to him, especially modern languages.' He ends with a pretty broad hint," added Mrs. Pitt, laughing. "*In case you should wish to send me a parcel, I want two good strong knives with copper shackles; also a steel marlinespike, about nine inches long, with a nice tapering point.*"

"Shall not you send them?" said Mervyn.

"Oh, I shall send them, but I had no intention of sending him a parcel till I got his letter. He wants a belt and a new necktie."

"I should like to be a sailor," said Lewis. "It must be fine fun. I'm never sick or frightened."

"Should you like the night-watches?"

"Well, I don't know. Does Sam keep watch?"

"Oh yes. He says, 'At the beginning of the voyage I was ap-

pointed to the second officer's watch; and I have four hours' watch and eight off in the twelve hours, viz. from four in the morning till eight, and from four in the afternoon till eight in the evening."

"How would you like getting up at four in the morning, old fellow?" said Fulk.

"I shouldn't mind it," said Lewis, "since I needn't sit up after eight."

"Would you like to go to bed at eight o'clock like Mervyn?"

"I don't mind it," said Mervyn. "Why should he?"

"Sam is a very good boy. Indeed all my children are good," said Mrs. Pitt thoughtfully. When my dear husband died I had to make a great difference in my way of living. Without a word from me, my dear children left off sugar in their tea, and beer at dinner. When I saw how self-denying they were, I was ashamed not to follow their example. It made a difference at the year's end, I assure you. But when Sam went to sea, I told him he must judge for himself about doing like other people. He got me to talk over the self-denial question, and of course I did not refuse him my opinion. Now he writes: 'You will remember that before I sailed I wrote to tell you I had resolved not to drink any wine, beer, or spirits. Well, the captain having invited me to dine with him, I accepted, and took my seat at the table. Nearly everyone present asked me to drink wine with him, but I declined each in succession. They looked at me rather strangely, and asked me why I took neither wine nor beer. I felt very awkward; however, dinner was at length over, and I went away. Next day the second officer asked me with much kindness why I had declined, and on my telling him the reason, he observed that it was considered an insult to refuse to drink wine with anyone, and that I had better take a little next time. Of course I raised objections to this, but he said that if I just touched the glass with my lips it would be sufficient. But the purser soon found me out too; and when he learnt the particulars, he gave me great credit for my proceedings, so I am now freed from all awkward questions.' I don't read this to you," continued Mrs. Pitt, folding up her letter, "to make *you* leave off wine or beer, but just to show you that when we bravely, and at the same time quietly, pursue what we feel to be the path of duty, we often find it less rough than we expected. I dare say you have read the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' Do you remember the lions that Christian saw standing at the next turn of the road, lashing their tails, as if waiting to swallow him up?"

"Yes," said Fulk; "he found the lions were *chained*, and their chains were too short to let them reach him."

"Well, now I must say good-bye. I hope you will like the Nonpareil."

"Oh, thank you, Mrs. Pitt, for thinking of us!"

She laughed and said, "After that I will tell Blanche of another pudding called Rigdum Funnidos."

"I do believe, Mrs. Pitt," cried Mervyn, "that you invented the name yourself."

"No I did not."

"Then Sam did?"

"Ah, Sam's a clever fellow. Never mind the name if you like the pudding:

'A rose

By any other name would smell as sweet.'"

When she was gone Mervyn said, "I like her—don't you? She's jolly."

"Lewis, what are you hunting for in my workbox?" said Blanche.

"A button," said Lewis. "One of mine has come off; I want to sew it on myself."

Blanche laughed and said, "You cannot sew a button on your right wristband with your left hand."

"Not if I use my teeth?" said Lewis.

"Let me sew it on for you, Lewis," cried Mervyn, which Lewis, after an ineffectual trial, let him do. Meanwhile Fulk had established himself very comfortably at his writing desk with a large sheet of paper before him, and was glad his brothers had found something to keep them quiet. After this Lewis applied to Amy for a worn-out sock, which she, in some surprise, found for him, and this he industriously applied himself to darn, pricking his fingers shockingly, and once actually sewing his finger to the sock.

"Never mind! Rome wasn't built in a day," said he.

"Lewis, I know what you are thinking of," whispered Mervyn with a very mysterious look.

"What am I thinking of, pray?"

"You're thinking of being a sailor."

"No, I wasn't. I was thinking your face wanted washing."

"Ah, I know you were thinking of the other too," said Mervyn laughing.

"What a conjuror!"

CHAPTER VI.

"HEAR ME, oh ye boys!" cried Fulk excitedly. "I'm going to make you a speech after the manner of the Romans." Here he was interrupted by a violent fit of coughing, and when he had recovered his breath, he went on in his usual voice: "You heard what Mrs. Pitt said about her sons making the best of it? It struck me, why should not we do the same?"

"Why, it's just what we're doing," returned Lewis.

"No! What have we got to show? What have we done of use? We've talked a great deal about Gardenia, and Mausolus, and soldiering and sailing, and lots of things, but nothing has come of them."

"What *should* come of them?" said Lewis. "I'm ready to go for a sailor to-morrow, if that's all."

"And I for a soldier, with my kit and my kitten," said Mervyn laughing.

"Stuff!"

"Soldiers *did* have kittens, though (those who could get them), in the Crimean war, and brought some of them back to England; mamma told me so," said Mervyn.

"Kittens have nothing to do with the present subject. What I say again is, why shouldn't we each undertake something we can refer to afterwards as what we did when we had the hooping-cough?"

"With all my heart," said Lewis.

"Won't my picture book do?" said Mervyn, rather doubtfully.

"I think we had better each choose for ourselves," said Lewis. "We may as well do what we like doing."

"Well, yes," said Fulk.

"Then that matter's settled; after the manner of the Romans," said Lewis laughing.

"A great many years after," added Mervyn.

Dead silence ensued for a considerable time—that is, about two minutes—which was broken by Mervyn's saying: "I think I shall go and ask mamma."

Lewis said "Don't." Fulk said "Let him; why not?" and sat down to write. Lewis muttered something about its being almost worth a fellow's while to get through the first book of Euclid, but did not quite commit himself. He was seen with Euclid, however, in the

course of the afternoon; and Blanche picked up a piece of paper scribbled all over with mysterious signs, ending with Q. E. D., the meaning of which, according to Lewis, was, "Which nobody can deny."

"Papa," said Fulk in the evening, "what do you think of cramming?"

"I think it gets the doctors plenty of patients, especially at Christmas," said Mr. Howard.

"I don't mean that sort of cramming," said Fulk laughing. "I mean headwork."

"That brings patients to the doctors too; especially about the season for competitive examinations."

"I suppose it does," said Fulk; "but what can people do?"

"Take their food regularly. You would starve if you had no meals, but you could not take your meals for the year in a single week."

"No, certainly not," said Fulk; and Mervyn looked very merry at the idea.

"Then you *don't* approve of cramming?" said Fulk.

"I do not; but I approve of training."

"Like Tom's?"

"Tom's is of a particular sort. So is that of the racing jockeys. Their aim is to be as light as they can. The pugilist trains himself to be as muscular as he can. The rowing-men at the universities have their special training. It cannot be obtained at short notice; no more can mental culture of any kind."

"I see," said Fulk slowly. "Then one must be always at it?"

"Something like it," said his father. "You know the Greek painter said he obtained his mastery of his art by never letting a day pass without a line. Perhaps he did not mean to be understood quite literally; nor did he mean that he *confined* himself to a line a day."

"No, of course not."

"But steady, energetic industry is better than spurts of application—better than cramming."

"I see."

"At the same time the racer, who has been training for a race, must put on more speed when the race actually comes. Only the more he has previously kept himself in a state of *preparedness*, the easier the race will be to him."

Mervyn thought this rather dry. And yet he was putting in prac-

tice his father's principle at the very time—steadily persevering in his drawing, and rubbing out his crooked lines again and again to put them in better. He was very fond of a volume of Pinelli's 'Etchings' belonging to his mother, and had copied one of them so nicely (considering his age) that Mrs. Howard told him if he copied all the others as well she would give him the book itself. This inspired him with zeal, for the book was not only very entertaining but very valuable; and many mammas might have thought it too valuable to bestow on a little boy not quite nine years old; but Mrs. Howard, who was not fond of competition, had a delightful habit of giving very nice rewards occasionally for tasks that required skill and perseverance; and Blanche used to call her their 'Lorenzo de' Medici, because she patronised the arts. Blanche had earned a very pretty hair bracelet by learning to play Martin Luther's hymn on the harp. At the same time, it is not to be supposed the young Howards were always on the look-out for premiums; they did not occur often enough for that.

"Mrs. Fielding is going to lay out a new garden," said Blanche, "and has asked me for a rough sketch of our flower borders. Could not you do it for me, Lewis? I could do it, of course, only I would gladly be saved the trouble."

"Oh yes, I'll do it," said Lewis, "since she only wants a rough sketch. I suppose I must just draw an oblong, and put in the rams' horns and curly-worlies and so forth?"

"Yes; only, you know, our garden is not an exact oblong, and if your plan is not in proportion you will not be able to get in all the beds."

To it went Lewis with great readiness, but he soon found, as Blanche had said, that unless he drew the plan in proper proportion he could not get in all the separate parts.

"You've made the Bank of Elegance too small," said Mervyn.

"I can easily make that bigger."

"Where's the savings' bank?" said Mervyn.

"Oh, bother! Go and mind your own drawing."

"But you've really left it out. Is this the Poet's Corner?"

The Poet's Corner was a border belonging to Blanche, in which she grew all the flowers and garden plants mentioned by her favourite old English poets, including some very ugly ones with remarkably nasty smells, such as tansy and rue; but she used to declare that even these had a value of their own—the fragrance of association. There were

plenty of others that had literal fragrance—moss rose, woodbine, eglantine, lily, violet, gillyflower, pink, carnation, sweetbriar, &c.

Lewis, after several failures, found it would be best to make an accurate plan on a reduced scale, a quarter of an inch to a foot, and at the day's end he had only made preparations for the day following.

Blanche spurred him onward by reminding him that officers in the Engineers had to make plans of fortifications and to map the enemy's country.

When blindman's holiday came Fulk said :

"I think we are fairly entitled to a story."

"I think so too," said Blanche. "What shall it be?"

"Soldiering."

"Oh what a boy you are for soldiering!"

"Don't let it be too shocking, please," said Mervyn.

"Nor yet too long ago," said Lewis.

"Will the Irish rebellion of 1798 be too long ago?"

"Well, perhaps not."

"Now then for

"THE SIEGE OF CELBRIDGE HOUSE.

"Colonel Napier and his wife, the beautiful Lady Sarah, having occasion to leave home, committed their eight children to the care of a nurse named Susan Frost, and a steady old man-servant, whose name, ten to one, was Patrick. Though the times were troubled, they left home without much uneasiness, for their absence was to be short, and the Colonel had already put his house in a pretty good state of defence, though it is not to be supposed that he had laid in provisions for a siege. Besides this, he had trained his brave boys, George, Charles, and William, to the use of arms; that is to say, they could fire a gun or pistol without falling down flat, go through the manual exercise, and so forth, so that of course he felt confidence in the garrison he was leaving behind him, as well as in their commandant, Susan Frost.

"The boys were naturally delighted at being left in charge, and assured their sisters they need not be frightened while under such valiant protection. The rebels had better come, that's all, and taste the reception in store for them! When bedtime approached, they accompanied Susan round all the outworks, to be sure everything was

right and tight for the night, and were having a final toast round the fire when—in burst Patrick, as white as death!

“‘Shure, an’ what’s the matter wid ye now, ye ould spalpeen?’ said Susan.

“‘Oh wirrastrew, my honey! the rebels are comin’ down upon us as hard as they can dhrive!’

“‘Are they, though?’ cries Susan, starting up, with all the children gathering around her. ‘Are ye downright shure?’

“‘As shure as ye’re there; and what ever shall we do?’

“‘Defend ourselves, to be shure,’ said Susan.

“‘Hurra!’ cried George. ‘Hurra!’ cried Charles. ‘Hurra!’ cried William; as brave as little lions.

“‘That’s right, my little darlints,’ cries Susan; ‘but now, having shown the spirit ye’re of (an’ are ye not the little eaglets of the eagle’s nest?), be quiet for your lives, and let’s prepare for the besiegers. Here, Kathleen, my honey,’ to a pretty, black-eyed servant, ‘will ye serve as a messenger?’

“‘Troth an’ I will,’ says Kathleen.

“‘Then off wid ye like shot through the back door, or, as the Colonel calls it, the postern, an’ cut away to Celbridge, and bid the red-coats come to our rescue, but mind ye don’t fall among the rebels by the way.’

“‘Trust me for that,’ said Kathleen, and away went the light-footed girl through the dark, taking by-ways that secured her from danger.

“Meanwhile the children, impressed by Susan’s intrepidity and self-possession, said, with heightened colours and flashing eyes:

“‘What is to be done next?’

“‘Let me see,’ said Susan. ‘Supposing the worst comes to the worst, the thunderin’ rogues may break through our outworks, which the Colonel hisself said might be wished a little stronger, and may compel us to take refuge in the citadel, which is his name for the strongest room in the house. To be prepared for the worst, then, we’ll barricade ourselves inside it at once, first carryin’ into it everythin’ in the shape of arms. Now then, young gentlemen, carry them there as fast as ever ye can, and mind, above all things, ye don’t blow yer precious selves to pieces in so doin’.’

“The boys promised to be careful (and, luckily, none of the arms were loaded), so everything in the shape of weapons and of ammuni-

tion was soon placed in the citadel. Meanwhile old Patrick, acting as look-out, sent a thrill through every heart by the awful words :

“ ‘They’re comin’! They’re close upon us!’

“ ‘All the worse for *them*!’ said the indomitable Susan. ‘Now then, darlins, the siege is begun. Rally round me, and help me to barricade the door,’—which they did, with bars, bolts, boxes, chairs, tables, and a chest of drawers.

“ ‘What next, nurse?’ whispered George excitedly.

“ ‘Master George, dear, I’ll be obliged to ye if ye will load me these pistols right up to the muzzle.’

“ ‘I’ll put in a proper charge,’ said George, for his father had taught him that an overcharged pistol would burst. ‘I think, nurse, you had better let Charles and me have these pistols, and when you say “Fire” we’ll fire.’

“ ‘Not a bit of it, Master George; ye might fire the wrong way and kill *me*, all by accident. I’m not afraid, me dear, of shootin’ others, but only of bein’ shot meself. Hark how the villains are batterin’ the front door! They’re parleyin’ with ould Patrick. Let’s listen what he says. “Is it arms ye want?” says Patrick. “Sorra a bit of arms have we got in the house.” Oh, the ould story-teller! sooner him than *me*.’

“ ‘What would *your* answer have been, nurse?’

“ ‘Just a shot through the head, me dear.’

“ ‘The noise now became terrific, for the rebels were battering at the door with a heavy beam. But just at this moment little Willy, who, perched at a dizzy height on piled chairs, was keeping watch through the round hole in the window shutter, shouted, and almost screamed with delight:

“ ‘The soldiers are coming—the rebels are running! Hurra, hurra, hurra!’ ”

On which Fulk, Lewis, and Mervyn echoed in chorus, “Hurra, hurra, hurra!”

[*To be continued.*]

THE LITTLE BIRD WHO TOLD STORIES.

THE LITTLE BOY AND THE LITTLE BIRD.

ONCE upon a time there was a little boy who was always wanting to know something. He used to ask question after question upon every conceivable topic. Sometimes they were very silly questions; and more often, though his questions were sensible enough, they were extremely difficult to answer. For the silliest little boy in the world may sometimes ask a question which the wisest man who ever lived would be unable to answer.

Now such questions as, "What is the moon made of?" "Where is the fire in a lucifer-match?" sprang from a curiosity which, although in itself very rational and intelligent, is sometimes probably idle enough. Others must have been to some extent the result of reflection, as when, after seeing a funeral, he wanted to know, "How will the last man bury himself?" Some were of a speculative character, as, for example, when he put the case, "Suppose, if an Englishman married a French woman, and war broke out between England and France, would the man have to fight his wife?" Others, again, were eminently practical, as on one notable occasion, when he got his father into tremendous difficulties in a discussion which originated in the very simple question, "What is a gentleman?" the plain fact being, that no definition of "a gentleman" which makes him dependent on birth, rank, or wealth, will hold water, and that the man who gives it *must* get into difficulties under cross-examination. As, however, comparatively few are at heart prepared to make the levelling admission that a man may be a gentleman in all essentials without any such worldly advantages, they cannot do better than follow the example of our little boy's father, and put a stop to embarrassing questions.

Now, the only way to obtain knowledge that has yet been discovered, or is likely to be discovered, is by diligence in study. There are some things which men can never find out in this life, let them be as diligent as they will, but which will remain mysteries to the end of the world. But there is a great deal that can be learned, and every year men are

making fresh discoveries, and finding out things which were not understood by men of former ages. But none of these discoveries are made by asking questions only; that is but the beginning, and must be followed up by hard work to get the answer.

You would suppose, then, that as this little boy was always wanting to know something, he would be fond of study, which was the only thing that could help him to what he wanted. But this was far from being the case; he was not at all fond of his lessons. Like many others he wanted a short cut, a royal road to knowledge; he would have liked to get to the top of the ladder without climbing up step by step from the bottom; and, this being a feat of mental gymnastics which no one has yet been able to perform, you will not be surprised to learn that he was growing up a dunce after all.

But whilst his numerous questions on art, science, philosophy, and things in general, brought him little knowledge and less satisfaction—for sometimes he was quizzed, sometimes deceived, often put off, and yet oftener put down—he did not fail to notice that there was one subject upon which those about him displayed a knowledge greater than he expected—such, indeed, as often astonished him. This was about his own ways and doings; and when he in astonishment would ask, “Why, how did you know so and so?” the answer was always, “Ah! a little bird told me.” And this occurred so often, that at last he began to think what a wonderful little bird this must be, and that he must be the very thing to tell him all he wanted to know.

So he began to look out for the little bird. He would go into a wood not far from which his father lived, and watch the birds flying about, and sometimes speak to them, but they only seemed to mock him as they twittered and flew away. He didn’t know much about birds, or indeed about anything; but he knew the Tom-tit and the Long-tailed Tit, and he had heard also of a Tell-tale Tit, and he thought it not unlikely that the latter might be the little bird he was in search of.

One still afternoon, overcome with the heat, and worn out with sheer idleness, a feeling of drowsiness stole over him, which he found it difficult to dispel. Spite of all his efforts, his head sank gently down to the lullaby of the murmuring breeze, and the joyous carols of his many feathered friends fell unheeded on his ear.

Whether he fell asleep and, if so, how long his sleep had continued, I cannot tell you; but he was suddenly startled by hearing his own

name spoken in a sweet, clear tone, such as he had never before listened to, and which instantly commanded his attention. "Argos," it said—"Argos, what wouldst thou have?"

He looked up. Could it be? Yes, there it was. A bird, small in size, but of a plumage so bright and so beautifully variegated, that it was more like the jewelled birds in a goldsmith's window than any living kind that he had ever seen, with beak of gold, eyes of diamonds, and feathers of every hue, all gorgeous and glorious to behold.

He gazed in silent awe at the wondrous apparition, till a second and a third time the question was repeated: "Argos! Argos! what wouldst thou have of me?"

Then he took courage to reply; but it was by no means an easy matter to express in words all in a moment a want which he had never clearly defined even to himself. Therefore he only stammered out in a confused sort of way, "I want knowledge; I want to know a great deal."

"Without the trouble of learning, of course?" said the little bird slyly. "But tell me more clearly what it is you do want. Knowledge is a very large word. There is only One who knows everything, and I presume you do not even wish to do that, supposing such a thing were possible."

"Well, no, I don't want that exactly," Argos replied, "but I should like to know a whole lot. I can't say how much, but ever so much."

"Would you like to know as much as the cleverest man knows?"

"Oh yes, and I think a little more."

"Well, tell me first," said the pretty bird, "what do you want to know so much for?"

"Oh, because wouldn't it be jolly to know more than papa, and mamma, and old Dixon, and to see people puzzling their brains over things, and then having to come and ask me about them, and to take Master Philip down a peg or two, who is always crowing over me about his verses or his prizes or some humbug of that sort! And I could make little steamers to cruise in our pond; and a little railway from the hall door to the kitchen with stations at the parlour and the drawing-room; and I could set up a telegraph, and heaps of things besides, and no nasty lessons! Oh, it would be the finest fun in the world!" And Argos clapped his hands gleefully in anticipation.



THE LITTLE BIRD WHO TOLD STORIES.

"You call to my recollection circumstances which I witnessed many years ago, and which I will narrate to you if you like," the bird said. "I am a fairy, and as I have been flying about the world these many, many years, and have visited every part of it, you may readily imagine that I have seen not a few very strange things."

"Oh, do tell me the story!" cried Argos eagerly. And forthwith the fairy began her story of

OLD HEADS ON YOUNG SHOULDERS.

"I once found myself in one of those far-off countries which you seldom read of out of books of Fairy Tales, but which are very beautiful and delightful to the few who are privileged to visit them.

"I used frequently to see there a little boy named Hassan, of about your own age, the son of poor parents who lived on the outskirts of the capital of the kingdom. He was a nice merry little fellow, and seemed as happy as the day was long. But suddenly a great change came over him. He ceased to play with boys of his own age, separated himself from his old associates, and became silent and, as it seemed, sad. To his former playmates he became so conceited and so intolerably patronising that, after having first ridiculed him for a prig, they ended by banishing him from their councils as a bore; whilst, from being affectionate and submissive to his parents, he became pert and wilful to the extent sometimes of downright disobedience. It was not long before I discovered the secret of this sad change. A fairy (it could not have been his godmother—she would have chosen a better gift) had bestowed on him immense knowledge; so that, although still only a little boy to look at, he was really a very great philosopher. It was the consciousness of immeasurable superiority that had made him conceited and overbearing to his playmates, and even to his parents.

"However, he had to pay dearly for his superiority. It cost him all the sweet pleasures of home, and all the bright joys of boyhood, for his playmates teased and hated him, and his parents, after trying remonstrance and punishment, began at last to be afraid of him, and to think he must be bewitched.

"Thus left to himself, Hassan solaced himself in making all sorts of wonderful things—steam-engines, and steam-boats, and things of that kind—to the intense horror of his poor father and mother, who could

not otherwise regard them than as contrivances of the evil one. Often did they shudderingly talk the matter over when the children were a-bed; and for Hassan's sake they resolved not to make the matter public. But when one morning, as his mother was trying to light her fire in the terribly tedious way that was in vogue before flint and steel, Hassan quietly took a lucifer-match from his pocket and kindled the fire without the least trouble, the poor woman could bear it no longer, but determined to go at once and take counsel of the priests how she should exorcise the demon who was teaching her son to make fire-boats, and fire-carriages, and even to call fire at his command out of a little bit of wood no bigger than her bodkin.

"Now it happened that there was at this time a grievous pestilence ravaging the country, and the people were very angry with the priests for not staying its progress. No sooner then had the poor woman told the priests her tale of woe, than it occurred to them that here was a splendid opportunity of diverting the rage of the populace from themselves on to the head of this unhappy boy. Dissembling their cruel purpose, they spoke kindly to the afflicted mother. 'Go in peace,' said they; 'fail not to return to-morrow at noon, bringing with thee thy miserable son and all his devilish instruments and devices. The demon cannot resist our power.'

"Meanwhile they proclaimed a grand festival for the morrow's noon.

"But although they kept their preparations very close, it came to the king's ears that the priests had got a witch or sorcerer or something of the kind, whom they were going to put to the ordeal on the morrow. Now the king happened to be in want of a witch for some private business of his own; but then he wanted a *live* one; and as he had observed that there was not much life in them to speak of after they had gone through the priests' ordeal, he took his measures accordingly.

"On the morrow, then, behold the people assembled in the great square in front of the principal temple. After solemn protestations, incense-burning, &c., Hassan was thrust forward on an elevated platform erected for the occasion, whilst a priest announced solemnly that after great skill and perseverance they had at last discovered the author of the pestilence. At sight of poor Hassan's boyish frightened face the people first laughed, and then uttered a howl of indignation,

not against the child, but against the priests, who they thought were playing off a trick upon them. But a grave grey-bearded old priest stepped forward and addressed them thus: 'This is no child, although such is his outward form. He is far older than I am, and I have seen a hundred summers. That innocent exterior covers the abode of a demon. Behold the proofs. Are *these* the work of a child, the playthings of a child? Do your own children make such things as these?' and so saying he exposed to view the fire-engines and other strange monsters that Hassan had made. And when a priest struck a match and set the engines going, a great fear seized on them, and those that stood nearest would have fled if they could; but finding that out of the question, they set up a louder and a fiercer howl than the first, and this time it was directed, not against the priests, but against their victim. And then a rush was made to the platform, and Hassan was borne away in the arms of the infuriated mob.

"They had not, however, gone far when an alarm was spread that a neighbouring king had entered the city, and that his troops were sacking the place: and sure enough the arms of a body of soldiers advancing to meet them were seen flashing in the sun. In a moment witches and sorcerers were forgotten, and by the time the soldiers had charged up, the whole mob had scampered away in terror, so that the officer had nothing to do but order them to take up the almost lifeless Hassan, and then face about for the king's palace.

"When our little boy came to himself, he found he was a close prisoner in a small apartment nearly at the summit of a lofty tower. But he had little time to ruminate on his sad position before the key was turned in the lock, and the king entered, who had disguised his own soldiers in the enemy's uniform in order to get this noted sorcerer into his hands. He addressed him kindly. 'I come as your friend,' he said. 'Assist me and I will assist you. Tell me where the treasure is hidden, which I have reason to believe my father removed a short time previously to his sudden death, and I in return will set you free and see you safe out of my dominions.'

"'Alas, great king! how gladly would I obey you,' replied Hassan trembling, 'but indeed I am no sorcerer, only a poor unfortunate little boy, and, although I know a good deal about some things, I am as ignorant of sorcery as yourself.'

"'Oh! if you are going to be sulky you must take the consequences,

that's all. All little boys, I dare say, have fire-devils for playthings just as you had! You must tell me a different story to-morrow, however, or back you go to the mob.' And so saying away went his majesty in a rage.

"At this conjuncture I offered Hassan my assistance. He asked for certain materials which I lost no time in procuring. Rapidly and skillfully he went to work. An hour before dawn his task was complete, and he stood by my side on the window ledge ready to fly from his prison on a pair of most wonderful wings which he had made for himself out of the materials I had brought to him. I led, he followed; and although his artificial wings did not work quite perfectly, he alighted, without any great hurt, at a solitary spot to which I guided him, where he could form his plans for the future undisturbed by any apprehension of violence.

"Of his after career I cannot speak positively, for circumstances compelled me to migrate to a warmer country soon after, but I believe he remained in close retirement until he grew up to manhood, and I am not at all sure that he ever ventured out of it as long as he lived."

"Is that true?" was Argos' first question when the little bird ceased to speak.

"As true as I'm a fairy," replied the bird. "It is only wicked ugly fairies that tell stories."

ARGOS SEES HIMSELF IN THE GLASS.

"Well, but, you know," said Argos, "there would not be the least danger now of any one's being burned for a witch because he was clever and knew more than other people, would there?"

"No, I don't think there is any danger of that. Perhaps, too, in this enlightened nineteenth century there is no danger of a little boy being conceited, or pert, or disobedient; and perhaps little boys are too enlightened to tease and bully any of their companions who choose to make themselves disagreeable; and perhaps parents now don't object to their children setting themselves up above them, laying down the law, and kindly correcting their ignorance; perhaps they rather like it than otherwise, and the family would only be drawn closer together in love and affection by the arrangement. I don't know, I am

sure : I have been so long out of the world, and out of genteel society, and everything is so changed to what it was when I was a chick, that it may be so. Perhaps, too, there would be no danger of a terrible accident happening on the 'Hall-door and Kitchen Grand Junction Railway,' in which the engine-driver might get killed; or of the famous clipper ship 'Fairy Bird' foundering off Willow Point on her voyage across the pond, like the poor 'London,' with all on board, including Captain Argos—the mate Carlo alone escaping by swimming to shore. Perhaps gunpowder and other chemicals are better behaved now than they used to be, and never blow the house out of windows. Perhaps balloons never take it into their heads to come down with a run. And, in short, perhaps everybody and everything has grown out of the old headstrong, wilful ways, and become as steady and sedate as, say, a parcel of boys just let out of school."

Argos laughed merrily at this recital.

"I'm afraid," said he, "we have not improved so much as all that. There wouldn't be much fun either if everything was so very quiet."

"Well, would you like to be as clever as Hassan was?" asked the little bird.

Argos knit his brows, and paused a few moments to consider. When he spoke it was very slowly, and with the greatest deliberation.

"No," he said, shaking his head; "I—think—not. It would be great fun in some things, the best spree I know; but perhaps I should be badgered a good deal. Besides, it would only be making an old fogey of me before my time, and that wouldn't do. No, I won't have that, thank you; but I really should like to know a great deal—not so much as the great clever men, but as much—enough—" and here he broke down.

"I see," said the little bird, "you are like a great many others, and don't know what *enough* is."

"Well, I'll tell you. I think it would be enough if I were to know already as much as I should know in the regular way by the time I was twenty-one. No, stop, that won't do either." (He had just recollected that, unless he was more diligent, the extent of his knowledge at twenty-one was likely to be extremely limited.) "I think it would be enough if I knew now as much as I ought to know—well, say as much as my cousin Philip will know when *he* gets to twenty-one. Yes, that will do nicely—as much as Phil will know when he is

twenty-one. I could take *him* down, at any rate, and I shouldn't want to learn lessons."

"Be it so," said the fairy-bird. "But before I put you on an equality with a twenty-one-year-old cousin, I will, if you like, narrate another little circumstance with which I became acquainted much more recently than that affair of Hassan's; indeed, quite a modern affair, which happened in this very country, and in which I was myself concerned."

So saying the little bird settled herself on her perch, and began her story, which we will call

LAZY-BONES' LOOKING-GLASS.

"Within a hundred miles of where I am now sitting, I once knew a little boy, who might have been as nearly as possible of your own age. I took rather a fancy to him; and seeing that he was so idle as to be in a fair way of growing up a complete ignoramus, I foolishly offered one day to bestow on him at once as much knowledge as a man with fair industry and ability ought to attain to by the time he has reached twenty-one. I need not say that he accepted the gift joyfully, and ran home with tremendous anticipations of the fun in store for him.

"His first act on reaching home was to rush up to the schoolroom and gather his books together. It did just flash across his mind that, if he were to make a bonfire of them, he would not only get rid of his tormentors effectually, but celebrate his triumph in a peculiarly appropriate and exhilarating manner; but on second thoughts it occurred to him as just possible that his father might not take the same view of the matter, and might even be so unreasonable and barbarous as to punish him for it. So that plan had to be laid aside; and he had to content himself with thrusting them ignominiously away, quite out of sight, into a dark corner of the cupboard.

"It was glorious when evening came, and his brothers got out their books and began to prepare their lessons, to be calmly amusing himself after his own fancy, just as if there was no such thing as school. And when his brothers remonstrated, and said, 'Won't you catch it, that's all?' his only reply was, 'That's *my* look-out—you won't care if I do.'

"But the best fun of all was at school, when he was called up to say his lessons, and his brothers were all on the look-out for his 'catching it,' as they had warned him. Wasn't it capital to see their surprise when he got through them without a single mistake? Every success, however, has its drawbacks, and it took something off his pleasure when Mr. Dixon——"

"Why, that is my master's name," interrupted Argos.

"When Mr. Dixon," the bird continued, "ordered him to remain behind, as he wished to speak to him. The boys didn't seem to care about those private interviews with Mr. Dixon, and sometimes even came away from them in tears.

"On this occasion Mr. Dixon merely told him that his morning lessons had convinced him of what he had all along suspected—that he could do much better if he chose to try; and gave him plainly to understand that for the future he would take no excuse for imperfect lessons.

"That same evening the following conversation took place between him and his father:

"FATHER: 'Mr. Dixon tells me that you said your lessons to-day remarkably well—so totally different from the way in which you have got through them before that he is convinced you have hitherto been very idle. You must not be so any more.'

"Boy: 'No, papa.'

"FATHER: 'But I learn from your brothers that you did not prepare your lessons at all last night, and that you openly avowed your determination not to look at them any more. Is that so?'

"Boy: 'Yes, papa; but indeed I don't want to look at them.'

"FATHER: 'That is very likely; but understand that you have got to do it.'

"Boy: 'I don't mean that. I mean that there is no occasion for me to. I know them all.'

"FATHER: 'Oh, indeed! What does the boy mean?'

"Boy: 'Why, papa, I mean that yesterday a little bird—a fairy, you know—bestowed on me ever so much knowledge, as much as a man has.'

"You should have seen his father's face when he heard this strange announcement. He looked at the boy to see if he was in earnest. Then he said, mockingly, 'My compliments to the little bird, and I am sure

I am much obliged.' Then he added sternly, 'Listen to me. This is the first time you have ventured to speak to me in this way; mind that it is the last. And look here, if ever you talk any more rubbish about little birds and fairies, I'll—I'll have you locked up for a madman, sir. Now be off to bed, and remember that if your lessons are not said, not even the Queen of the Fairies shall save you.'

"This was not exactly the programme that our now learned little friend had marked out for himself. He had calculated on applause and admiration, and lo! here was incredulity and censure. There was nothing for it, however, but to acquiesce, and from that day not another word passed his lips about the fairy. Thus at least half the pleasure derived from his gift was shattered at a blow, for a triumph you are obliged to keep to yourself is scarcely even half a triumph.

"Then for all his silence there did leak out, somehow or other, a schoolroom version of the fairy gift. He was at once nicknamed 'Cinderella;' absurd rhymes were composed; his godmother's health was affectionately inquired after, and he was otherwise tormented in a variety of ingenious ways, which the juvenile mind will very readily imagine for itself.

"All these things tended to create in his mind a vague impression that there was a mistake somewhere, that it wasn't quite as jolly as it ought to be. But at least one solid gain remained from his gift; and that was his triumph over his cousin Philip."

Argos started. "Why that's *my* cousin's name!"

"Don't interrupt me," said the bird. "I have nearly finished. Well, as I was saying, none of these annoyances could deprive him of the satisfaction he derived from beating his old rival Philip, a satisfaction which remained to him during his school days, and for some time after they had both gone to Oxford. But the end came. Philip was now twenty-two, and, being industrious, he had of course made some advance in knowledge during the past year, whereas Cinderella had remained stationary. His fairy gift had only made him more idle than he had been before, so that the moment Philip reached and passed the age of twenty-one, he reached and passed his cousin as steadily and quickly as a traveller passes a milestone. But neither of them was aware of the change; the awakening came in this way.

"They both went in for a college scholarship, and Philip, the can-

didate least feared by Cinderella, was nevertheless, to his great mortification, the successful one.

"Then it was he recollected that, from the day of Philip's reaching the age of twenty-one, all the advantages of his fairy gift had ceased; but not so its disadvantages, the idle lazy habits it had fostered, and which were now part of his very nature. I don't think we need follow his history further. Whether or not he recovered his lost ground would depend on whether or not he fought against his lazy habits and overcame them. But of this we may be sure, that, if he afterwards became a learned man, it was *in spite* of my gift to him, and not because of it."

When the little bird ceased speaking, Argos remained silent in deep thought. At last he said, "That was my story, wasn't it?"

"It was that of a little boy who was very like you, at any rate. Would you like to have the same gift?"

"Well, no, thank you, I think not; I don't think I should do exactly like that little boy, but still I dare say none of them would believe about the fairy, and perhaps it would make me awfully idle. I am quite idle enough already."

"Then I'll give you a better gift, if you are willing; not so showy a one perhaps, but one that will wear better. The short cut, you know, is often the longest way. What do you say to trying the old beaten track? Will you have the gift of *Industry*?"

But Argos couldn't bring his grand notions all at once down to such a matter-of-fact every-day thing as that. He made one last effort to uphold his own views.

"Wouldn't it be better if I could have something that would, at any rate, get me over *each day's* lessons without my learning them? They are such a bother."

But the fairy stood her ground. "No," she said, "the effect would be just the same. If I were to give you a fairy dictionary that would turn over its own leaves, and a patent machine for making Latin verses, I dare say they would amuse you, but they would make you a confirmed idler for the rest of your life; and not only so, but what you learned one day would be forgotten the next. Knowledge that comes without effort on our part escapes just as easily. There is no substitute for industry. It is the labour of getting knowledge that stamps it on the mind and memory.

"I will give you industry, then. Instead of ARGOS you shall be called ENERGOS, and years hence you will thank me for the course I now take. Farewell."

And so away flew the little bird; and when ARGOS roused himself and looked around, the evening had set in, and he saw that their interview must have extended over many hours.

So he went home, and whether it was a real fairy-bird he had seen, or whether he had fallen asleep and dreamed, certain it is that from that day he became industrious. The gift remained, however it had come, and its consequences were much more happy than those which had attended the other gifts of which the little bird had discoursed.

For not only did he give satisfaction to his parents, and earn the applause of his masters, but he took his own part against his cousin Philip and all other rivals, who, seeing that his success was fairly earned by persevering hard work, bore it without grudging and without ill-will.

; NORMAN.

THE PRINCE OF SLEONA.

Book II.

CHAPTER VII.

THE THIRD GUIDE.

LOROIO continued to labour carefully and diligently. The young branches shot forth from the tree, and spread on all sides, and soon they were clothed with large leaves, soft and thick, of a dark rich green above, and white on their under sides. The tree continued to spread and grow, overshadowing the old tomb; it waved its branches in the breeze, made a chequered shade on the grass, and stood in renewed freshness and vigour, a thing of life and beauty.

But no flowers appeared. Day after day the prince and the hermit carefully examined every one of the branches in hopes of seeing a flower-bud, only to be disappointed; and, as time wore on, Loroio began to lose heart, although he still worked on assiduously. But one evening the hermit, who had been employed for some days in diligently

poring through a pile of old and dusty manuscripts (in various languages, which the prince was unacquainted with), came up with an exultant air to Loroio, who was sitting near the lake resting after his day's work, and, raising a pair of enormous circular spectacles from his eyes to his forehead, said, as he drummed with his finger on a manuscript which he held in his hand, "I have got it! I have got it!"

"Got what?" Loroio asked absently, for at the moment he was thinking of something widely different.

"I have found out what the tree requires—what I have been searching after for the last week. This is the manuscript of Murana-eb-Bal, who obtained flowers from the tree two hundred and fifty years ago. What you must now apply to the roots is ice. He calls it 'solid water,' but I know the name of ice is given to that now-a-days, though I have never seen the thing myself. So there you have it. Apply ice to the roots and the tree will flower." And he waved his manuscript triumphantly.

"Ice!" said the prince astonished, and from old habit of thought this seemed to him a simple and easy matter; for in Sleona, although, as we remember, there was no frost or cold in the winter months except on the high mountain which stood in the centre, yet that mountain provided an abundant supply of ice, which was continually made use of for many purposes—the preserving of provisions, the making of cool beverages, &c. But he soon remembered that he never had met with any ice in Tama; and, indeed, Tama was a much warmer country than his own.

"But where is this ice to come from?" he asked. "Do you know of any lofty mountains having winter always at their summits? For I have never seen any in this country, even in the distance."

"The mountains of my country," said the hermit, "are the princes of all mountains. They touch the stars with their crowns, and their sides are full of jewels and of precious metals. But I know not what you understand by 'winter at their summits.' And as for solid water, I cannot suppose that it exists except in the benighted and doleful countries at the ends of the earth, where the wretched barbarian tribes pass their lives in continual darkness, physical and spiritual. Dear, dear! what is to be done?"

"But read his manuscript further," said Loroio: "surely he says

something as to how and where he obtained it? If he could find ice, surely so can I."

"True, true," said the hermit. "I will read on; but this writing of his is marvellously crabbed, and he expresses himself quaintly; then the manuscript is incomplete—the latter part of it is lost; however, I will go on." But instead of going on he hurried away back to the temple, leaving the manuscript behind him, and Loroio heard him bustling about in there, apparently moving tables, stools, &c., and occasionally ejaculating impatiently; and in a little time he came out again, out of breath, fanning himself with a palm leaf, and in a profuse perspiration.

"What is the matter?" asked Loroio, smiling at his disconcerted appearance. "You seem quite exhausted."

"My dear boy," said he, with his kind smile, "it is only one of the plagues of my life—a thing which happens so often that I ought to be quite accustomed to it now; yet I can never take it patiently. Those *little* troubles after all perhaps vex us more than greater ones. I have mislaid my spectacles."

"Why, they are on the top of your head all the time," said Loroio, who could not help laughing heartily, though without the least unkindness.

"I declare, so they are," said the hermit. "I have been searching everywhere for them," and he joined in the laughter quite heartily himself. (He is not the only wise man who has made a similar mistake, even in matters of greater importance.)

After carefully going through page after page of the manuscript, while Loroio eagerly watched his countenance, he turned over the last leaf and cried out, discouraged at length, "No, here you see is the very last page left, and that is all stained and nearly illegible, and there is not a word about it. Ha! yes, yes, let us see; what says he here?"

And the hermit, holding the manuscript up so that the bright light from the west, where the sun had just disappeared beyond the trees, might strike upon it, read slowly and with some difficulty, as follows:

"And now it may be fitting that I should record, for the benefit and solace of those who may be walking in my footsteps in the years of the future, the manner in which I was enabled to obtain the solid water which I found to be needed for causing the tree to blossom.

"Being disheartened at the long-enduring lack of this crowning success, I had left the island one day to wander in meditation on the

further shore of the lake, and as I lay beneath the shade of a cypress——’

“Dear, dear, how teasing!” cried the hermit, at a standstill. “Here follow six or seven lines of which I cannot make out one word. The ink has faded, and, besides, there is a great stain from damp. Is this not truly provoking?”

“Do try if there is any *trace*, even of anything, to be made out,” cried Loroio, all eagerness.

The hermit persevered, and at length said :

“There are a few words legible at the end, and what to make of them I leave to you, for I confess I know not. Here they are, however”——

“——the sensation of *cold*, which, as this Moth of the Solid Water (for thus I named it) wheeled and darted in its flight, seemed to distil from its wings——’

“And there the page comes to an end, and the manuscript with it. Now was there ever anything so truly unfortunate?”

But at this moment there flashed across Loroio’s brain the recollection of a portion of his vision in the magic fluid at Black Castle, which until now he had completely forgotten. The fragment of description of a “sensation of cold” accompanying the “wheeling and darting flight” of some insect, reminded him of the “moving point of brilliant greenish light” which he had seen, and which had then, too, been attended by a feeling of coldness; and he could have no doubt that this “Moth of the Solid Water” was one of the “guides” mentioned to him by the adept, and that the time had now come for him to go in search of it. The next day accordingly, and for several days in succession, he crossed to the further shore of the lake and wandered about, trusting that he might see this creature, and expecting that it would lead him to some place where he should find the ice, on the discovery of which his hopes now hung. For many days he was unsuccessful, and it grieved him to be compelled to waste in this manner so much valuable time. However, he did not neglect the tree, but devoted a portion of every day to tending it.

At length one day, when he least expected it, he saw the Moth of the Solid Water. Like Murana-eb-Bal, he had laid himself down to rest under a cypress, though indeed without noticing that it was a cypress, and as he lay reposing there he suddenly shivered as though a chilling air had breathed upon him, and, looking up, he saw the creature of

which he was in search glittering brilliantly with a greenish light in the shade of the trees, but darting hither and thither in zigzags so rapidly that the eye could not make out its form. He went towards it, and it moved off through the foliage, continuing its rapid zigzag manner of flight, and before very long it entered into the mouth of a rocky cavern on the side of a hill. Loroio followed, but was unable to proceed far on account of the darkness. So, carefully marking the spot, he returned overjoyed to the island, purposing to go back next day with lights in order to explore the cave, where he felt convinced the ice was to be obtained.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SOLID WATER AND ITS EFFECTS.

WHEN the morning came Loroio and the hermit set off together, taking torches with them to light them in the cavern, which they soon arrived at and proceeded to explore. It was a scene of marvellous beauty. At first they passed through winding passages full of stalactites of varied and fanciful forms, which gleamed and glittered in the light of the torches like precious stones. And at length they came to a point where the cavern opened out, and here they found a great sloping deposit of ice somewhat like a glacier. They could not discover from whence the glacier came or whither it went, as it shelved away and disappeared under a barrier of rock upon which they were standing. Neither of them had ever beheld anything more exquisitely beautiful than its pure, pale green, translucent masses; while over its surface, and above under the vaulted roof of the cave, numerous creatures, like the Moth of the Solid Water seen in the forest, were playing and darting to and fro, seeming in their rapid flight like animated gems. The cold was so intense, however, that Loroio and the hermit could only bear to remain for a very short time in the cave, and, shivering and freezing, they had to beat a speedy retreat to the outer air.

But they returned the next day, taking with them a supply of warm garments to be worn while they were in the cave; and, while the hermit held a torch, the prince broke off a quantity of the ice, to be carried home on his back packed with plantain leaves in a basket. This process was repeated daily, and the expected result soon followed. An unmistakable flower-bud appeared on one of the branches of the tree,

and was soon succeeded by two others. They swelled and developed, and at length one evening it appeared evident that the first bud would burst the next day.

The prince's eagerness to see the first flower effectually prevented his sleeping. After trying to beguile the time by studying a manuscript on music, of which he had recently learned to decipher the character, he could not refrain from going out to look at the tree, and to see if he could judge in the darkness what progress the bud had made towards opening.

It was just after midnight, dark and still, the sky was clouded, and no stars were visible. The world was asleep; not a sound could be heard except the voices, mellowed by distance, of the frogs in a far-off marsh in full tide of conversation.

When he came in sight of the tree, he perceived that from the branch where the first bud was there proceeded a steady, faint light of a pale greenish colour, not unlike that of a glowworm, but brighter. The bud had opened at the top, and the flower had partly shot forth from it. The pale green light was given out by the flower. On examining the bud closely, he found that the top of it—its point—was surrounded and surmounted by a pointed, steady flame, about three-eighths of an inch in depth. After looking upon it in admiring wonder for a long while, he returned to the temple, anxiously expecting the morning.

The next day the flower was fully blown. It was a large flower, star-shaped at the top, and having a deep bell, containing highly ornamented and exquisitely formed anthers and pistils. It was of a somewhat thick and fleshy consistency, and had a faint, sweet perfume. By day it gave out no light. Its colour was a bright emerald green outside and inside, flowers, anthers, and pistils; contrasting in the most charming manner with the dark tint of the leaves of the tree. On this, the second night of its existence, the light which it gave out was of the same shape as itself—that is to say, a star-shaped flame shot outwards from the edges of the blossom to the distance of about three inches, while a pointed jet of light rose perpendicularly from the centre of the bell to about the same height. The colour of the light on this night was bright emerald green, like that of the flower during the day. A breeze was blowing, but by no means affected the flame, which shone clear, steady, and unwavering.

Next morning the colour of the flower had changed to pure white,

the pistils and anthers being of a tender rose colour. That night the light from the outer portion of the flower was bright white, while that which came from the centre was rose colour.

During the succeeding days the colours changed daily in the following order :—

The third day the flower was rose colour, stamens and pistils scarlet.

The fourth day, flower scarlet, stamens and pistils pale blue.

The fifth day, flower pale blue, stamens and pistils deep blue.

The sixth day, flower deep blue, stamens and pistils rich violet.

The seventh day, flower a bright rich violet, stamens and pistils pale orange.

And the eighth day the flower was of a rich velvety black, the stamens and pistils a deep orange, inclining to red.

On the third, fourth, and fifth nights the light given out by the flower was of the two colours which it had worn during the day. On the sixth night, the light was altogether feebler, that coming from the violet centre being the faintest, and not reaching to the height above the flower which it had attained on previous nights. On the seventh night the flower scarcely gave out any light, although a faint dusky glow was still visible as proceeding from it. And the night after that it had altogether ceased to be luminous.

Meanwhile, other blossoms had blown upon the tree, each of which, in due course, passed through the same series of daily and nightly changes in succession. It may be imagined what a strangely beautiful spectacle the tree presented, covered with its flowers in all their various colours; and at night, when those variously tinted blossoms became so many variously tinted magical lamps, as it were, giving out their steady and unwavering flames of so many beautiful hues, its marvellous beauty was such that the prince and the hermit could never tire of gazing upon it, and would pass hours in contemplating it in silent wonder.

When the first flower had become black, and had ceased to give out light, it did not undergo any further change beyond slightly drooping its head; and after some days had passed, as it remained in the same condition, the prince and the hermit concluded that it had arrived at maturity. So Loroio gathered and ate it, as he had been directed to do. Its taste was exceedingly pleasant, putting him somewhat in mind

of that of a fruit of which he had been fond in his own country, which is called at the present day the mangostine. This, as you probably know, is a common fruit in some parts of the East, and is contained in a dark-coloured, thick, and hard husk, about the size of a large plum, which is of a clear red tint inside, the fruit itself being of a pure pearly white colour, and divided into lobes, with a hard kernel. The flower of the marvellous tree resembled this fruit to some extent in taste only. As already mentioned, it was of a fleshy consistency, and it was full of a red juice.

The eating of the first flower did not produce any appreciable effect upon Loroio's health. But as time wore on he began to experience a very marked improvement in his mental and bodily condition. One of the first results of this was that he was enabled to devote a good deal of his spare time to the study of the manuscripts in the temple. The hermit instructed him in the languages and characters in which they were written, and he found many of them to be of the greatest importance and interest. They treated of a great variety of subjects, and, though at times they were written in quaint and allegorical language, they dealt with broad and deep principles, often making matters easily understood, which, till he read them, the prince had considered hard and obscure. And when, in due time, he came to be king of his own country, the great knowledge, and the many acquirements and accomplishments which rendered him so remarkable as a ruler, were in great part the result of the studies which he prosecuted while labouring on the island.

Very often, however, his thoughts would speed away to the outer world. He would wonder how matters were going on in Sleona, which, as far as he was concerned, might as well have been then in another planet. He would sometimes be unable to resist a passing feeling of regret at being thus, in the prime of his youth, exiled from all that the world was occupied about—constrained to pass his days in a lonely little island, in the midst of an enchanted realm, with no one to talk to but an old hermit. But such thoughts as these were too evidently inspired only by the powers of evil, and he instantly dismissed them from his mind, accusing himself of the blackest ingratitude, and working with redoubled ardour at his tree and his manuscripts. And yet they were not so very unnatural after all.

In this manner many months passed by. The improvement in the

prince's health became most marked. He grew light of heart, and greatly more vigorous in mind and body. Still he was not *cured* as yet. Occasionally the tree would produce more than nine flowers in a month, although this was not generally the case; and he had difficulty in determining whether to preserve or to eat those in excess of the six stipulated for by the Lord of the Black Castle. They were doing him so much good that he decided on the latter course, and this gave him at times pangs of conscience, but only at times, and he dismissed the subject speedily from his mind.

CHAPTER IX.

A GLAD SURPRISE.

SUCH of the flowers of the tree as were preserved (which underwent no apparent change after they had reached maturity), were sent, at long intervals, to the Black Castle. At those times Loroio, when he went out to his work early in the morning, would see a long, sharply built, and narrow boat floating on the lake, and from this boat there would land a black slave, deaf and dumb—the same whom the prince had seen at the Black Castle. The first time this slave arrived in this manner he presented a letter from the Lord of the Black Castle, telling Loroio to send, in the bearer's charge, such flowers as he had preserved; and they were accordingly handed to him. Upon which, after depositing them in his boat, he paddled to the further side of the lake, landed, and went away into the woods, from whence he returned at evening, bringing with him a number of birds, lizards, small brilliantly coloured serpents, tiny monkeys, and other creatures, which he had caught, and which sat on his arm and shoulders, or nestled in the folds of his garments, as if they were partially fascinated or stupified. When the morning came he had gone. He proceeded in the selfsame manner each time he came, except that, after his first visit, he brought no letter.

But at length, when more than a year had passed in this manner, the boat and the deaf and dumb slave were discovered one morning in the lake, and this time there was a letter from the Lord of the Black Castle in the following terms:

‘You must leave the island and your labours, and return in the

messenger's boat to me without delay. Your uncle's remaining days on earth are few. You must repair to Sleona with all possible speed. By the time you can arrive there, the kingdom will lack you as its ruler."

It was almost impossible at first to realise the whole bearing of this sudden and utterly unexpected piece of news; but, though his mind was in a strange whirl, Loroio set about obeying. He had long ceased to believe, with sober conviction, that he would ever be king of his beloved native land; hardly had he allowed himself to hope that he would ever even set foot in it again. He had thought it necessary, and had striven hard, to banish from his mind all fancies bearing upon that subject. Manifold as were the possibilities hidden in the dark future, and as to which it was impossible to avoid speculating at times, *this* had not seemed to be among them. If, indeed, he had been told by some powerful and benignant fate to select his future destiny, this would have been the first and dearest object of his choice. And now it was vouchsafed to him! He knew well that his informant spoke the truth.

Yet, immense as was his joy—all the greater because so unlooked for—it was not without a deep regret that he prepared to look his last upon the beautiful island, the scene of his labours—upon the marvellous tree, which had arisen from its grave at his touch—the temple, where he had passed the peaceful time, and stored his mind with learning—the kind and gentle hermit, so long his only friend and companion. Notwithstanding the satisfaction which he derived from his great success in his efforts—the tangible benefit to himself which had resulted from his work—the further, and as yet undisclosed, advantages which were hereafter to accrue to him and to others—he felt, in all its intensity, that sadness which we experience on leaving the place where our lot has been cast for any considerable period. Even although we may have been, in the main, unhappy in a place, we feel still, when the time comes that we must leave it, that we are, in some measure, sorry to go. No place and no condition of life is altogether without something of good; and, at such times, we are apt to remember chiefly, if not solely, what has been good, and to forget, in great measure, that which has been amiss. Although, then, life on the island had been often but tedious and uninteresting, and without much—nearly all, indeed—of that which a young man's heart desires, and looks upon as truly constituting happiness, it had been a calm and pure life, productive of the truest benefit to body and mind. And when

and where should he ever look upon anything of such exquisite beauty as that marvellous tree, now covered with its varied blossoms—those blossoms which would doubtless be the last which it would now bear; or *would* it continue to bear them, or at once revert to its former dormant condition until some other should seek it and find it, as he had done?

But there was no time to indulge in reflections such as these; for the messenger gave signs of eagerness to be gone, and, after all, Sleona was at the other end of the journey now to be commenced. The hermit read the letter in silence, and bowed his head in sorrowful submission. This boy had grown to be the darling of his heart, the son of his old age, his pride and joy. For him there had awakened in his breast, so long dead to the things of the world around him (though so remote from him), one of those deep and pure affections which belong but to old age, when, the wearing and engrossing toils and struggles of middle life being over and past, the soul puts on a second youth—the dawn of the life beyond the grave. That life must soon commence for him, and he cared not now how soon.

“Go, go, my dear boy,” he said; “hasten to your home, your kingdom, and your people. Your life is all before you; the sun is breaking through the morning clouds which have obscured his light, and, doubtless, all the brighter will his radiance be. May the Djên of Light protect you, enlighten you, and guide you on your path! You will remember me sometimes, when you are sad and unhappy—not when you are happy; that I would not wish. Should you ever come again—you *may* come again some day, who knows?—look kindly at my tomb as you think of the days we have spent together, and if the weeds are growing rank about it clear them away. You will do this, I know, if it is so. But I shall see your face no more on this side the portal.”

The prince embraced his dear old friend with tears, and hastened away, for he could find no voice nor words in which to say farewell. As he moved down the lake in the messenger's boat, he gazed sadly and fondly at the lovely island, as it faded on his view, the hermit being seated under the tree close by the tomb, his face hidden in his robe, his figure bowed in bitter sorrow. Soon they turned into the stream which flowed out of the lake, and hermit, tree, and island were lost to sight.

A. E.

[*To be continued.*]



HUNTING THE WIND.

HUNTING THE WIND.

WHEN the fire is burning bright,
 And the kettle hums and sings
 In the happy winter night,
 Children talk of many things :
 Talk of mermaids in the sea
 And of fairies in the wood,
 Pretty things that ought to be,
 And surely would be if they could !

Then the wind comes creeping near,
 Tired of fighting with the trees,
 List'ning with a sort of fear
 To such merry sounds as these ;
 Crying like a child in pain,
 With a foolish ceaseless din,
 Knocking on the glass again,
 Begging them to let it in !

Out spake little Curlyhead :
 " This poor wind is taken ill ;
 Soon it will be lying dead
 On the frozen window-sill.
 Very cruel children we
 If we let it die alone—
 If we do not run and see
 Why it makes that dreary moan."

And he flung the window wide,
 And the wind came tearing through,
 Dashing everything aside
 With its hulla-bulla-loo !
 Blowing both the candles out—
 Roaring, rushing, raving by—
 Scattering the smoke about—
 While the children scream and fly !

HUNTING THE WIND.

Out spake little Curlyhead,
 Though his breath he scarce can draw :
 "Nurse would snatch us off to bed
 If this horrid mess she saw !
 Hunt the thankless creature low—
 Seize it, catch it, if you can.
 I will teach it manners though
 If I live to be a man !"

Chubby arms are flung about,
 Toddlings feet run here and there—
 Some would chase the creature out,
 Some would tie it to a chair—
 While the eldest of the crowd
 Shuts the window where she stands,
 Little Blueeyes shouts aloud,
 She has caught it in her hands !

Curlyhead with manly rage
 Stamps his foot and cries, "Hurrah !"
 Redcheeks brings an empty cage,
 Where no pretty birdies are ;
 Little Blueeyes fat and fair,
 Hollow'd hands above her head,
 Moves with cautious footsteps where
 Redcheeks stands with Curlyhead.

Curlyhead the cage doth hold,
 Redcheeks keeps it open wide,
 Little Blueeyes, when she's told,
 Thrusts her two fat hands inside.
 Ah ! they have the fellow now,
 Little Blueeyes shouts anew ;
 Curlyhead performs a bow,
 Redcheeks makes a curtsy too !

Hang the cage up if you will ;
 Clap your hands, ye hunters rare.
 But he is so sad and still—
 Are you *sure* that he is there ?
 Ah ! the days are coming when
 You'll have many a chase as blind ;—
 Capture, triumph, laugh, and then
 But an empty casket find !

EÓINEÍN.

THE COUSINS AND THEIR FRIENDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SYDNEY GREY," ETC.

CHAPTER X.

SPRING AT CARNELLEN.

THE early spring and unusually fine summer weather was very welcome that year at Carnellen. The inhabitants of the cottage were in want of as much brightness as they could have outside the house, for with the first month of spring a great trouble had come upon them, which clouded the sunshine within. Captain Mannering, who had now been at home for nearly two years, had last autumn applied for a ship, and in the middle of April came his appointment to the command of the *Sea Lion*, coupled with an intimation that he must join immediately, as the *Sea Lion* was under orders to start for a lengthened cruise in the Japanese seas. It was hardly a surprise, for Captain Mannering had been anxiously looking out for some such letter all the winter; yet on Mrs. Mannering, Alice, and Arthur the news fell with almost as heavy a blow as if they had previously considered it a settled thing that Captain Mannering was to remain with them at Carnellen for the rest of his life. Harry could not for the first few days after the news came be quite as unhappy as the other three. Curiosity about the *Sea Lion*, and anxiety to know what was the shape of her figure-head, and what the nature of her armament, diverted him at first from painful anticipations of the approaching parting from his father.

It was well he could ask questions all through dinner-time, and go whistling about the house as usual, while he pictured the glories of the *Sea Lion* to himself; for if he and his father had not kept up each other's spirits, and found a great deal to say on naval affairs, Captain Mannering's last week at home would have been a very silent and tearful time. Not that Mrs. Mannering gave way to her grief. There is no telling the quantity of business she and Alice transacted (in the most complete and methodical way too) amid the bustle of that sorrowful season—the towels and handkerchiefs they hemmed, the sheets they

marked, the books and stores they looked out, the boxes they packed. But at meal-times, or in blindman's holiday, when no work was to be done, Mrs. Mannering was disposed to sit back very weary and silent in her chair, and could not bring herself to do more than nod and smile pleasantly at the happy pictures Captain Mannering liked to paint, of how well they would all get on while he was away, and of how much he should enjoy the cheerful letters full of details of their daily doings that they were to send him by every opportunity. It was quite as well that Harry could answer, and carry on the conversation briskly when other people could not find many words to say.

It was perhaps on account of this cheerfulness (which proceeded from no want of feeling) that Captain Mannering permitted himself to say a few words of graver farewell to Harry than he thought it well to address to either of the other children. On the last day but one before Captain Mannering's departure, he and Harry walked up the mountain together for the last time, and on their return, just as they reached that curve in the hill-side from which the best view of the cottage of Carnellen, nestling at the foot of the mountain, could be obtained, Captain Mannering turned aside from the footpath, and, leaning his arms on one of the low white stone walls that divide the hill pastures, he remained for a long while looking, now down into the Carnellen garden, where he could just descry the diminished figures of mamma, Alice, and Arthur, pacing up and down the high terrace walk, and then away out to sea, where the horizon line was hidden in a creeping grey mist.

It was a chillish April day, and Harry got tired of standing still, and of trying to warm himself by throwing stones at the sheep, before his father raised himself from his stooping attitude with a great sigh, and said he was ready to resume their walk. He put his hand on Harry's shoulder, and leaned on him as they were going down the hill; and Harry looked up into his face, surprised to see how very grave it was. His father was not then so wholly delighted at the thought of sailing with the *Sea Lion* as he had supposed. In answer to his inquiring glance, the Captain talked to him in a different strain from any he had ever used before—more as if Harry were a grown-up man and a friend he could really converse with. He began by remarking that, though Harry might not now understand all he was going to say, he must keep the words in his heart, and that their meaning would grow clear to him

as he got older. Life was uncertain to everyone, Captain Mannering went on, more uncertain to seafaring men than to any others, and Harry must always remember that he was the eldest of the family, and that a time might come, early in his life perhaps, when the care of all the others would devolve on him. He must begin now to prepare for the part that might come to him. He must feel bound to obey his mother when she was left alone more scrupulously than he had done before. He must remember when he had tasks to do, as distasteful to him as were some of his lessons, that he was working at them for his mother's sake, in order that he might early grow into a sensible man, fit to be trusted by his mother, and strong enough to protect her against some people (there were some, Captain Mannering was sorry to say) who were disposed to be unjust to her, and who would certainly take advantage of her desolate state if anything happened to him.

Harry felt almost as if he were growing larger, and taller, and stronger as his father talked to him in this way; the thought of anyone ever being unkind or unjust to his mother, and of his having to stand up for her, made his heart swell very high indeed. Oh, if it could only happen now! If her enemies could be lions instead of people, and he could tear them in pieces as Samson did! It was rather a come-down to know that standing up for his mother would probably never mean fighting at all; and that making himself worthy to be her protector meant nothing at present but extra diligence and exactness in the old stupid business of learning lessons and doing as he was bid. Harry did not see the connection between the two ideas, but since his father said there was one, he resolved to receive his opinion unquestioningly and act on his advice.

When they were within a step of the garden gate, Captain Mannering paused again, and looked steadily for a minute into Harry's eager, glowing face.

"I think you understand me, Harry," he said. "I think you will even now, young as you are, begin to look after the others, to care more for your mother's comfort and the good of your sister and brother than for your own pleasures, or fancies, or self-will; that is what I want from you, my boy, and I think you will not disappoint me."

"I will not," Harry said softly but very firmly; and when he felt his father's hand gently pressing his shoulder, and saw that some of the

trouble passed from his face at his words, Harry felt very happy—happier and yet graver than he had ever felt in his life before.

The next day, the very last before Captain Mannering left Carnellen, no one of the family went beyond the house and garden. They all thought they were too busy to leave home, yet in reality there was very little left for anyone to do. The heavy sea-chests and more bulky luggage had been sent off early in the morning. Harry got up at five o'clock to help to see the boxes placed in the wagon that was to take them down to the station. But when he had held open the yard gate and watched the wagon as far on its way up the steep road as his eye could follow it, there seemed nothing further for him to do. The house looked very empty without the boxes, about which everyone had been busied and interested for ten days, though when they were filling the hall Mrs. Mannering and Arthur had hardly ever passed them without the tears coming into their eyes.

It was altogether a dull miserable day, and would have been worse for the children if Betsey had not contrived to get up a good deal of bustle in the kitchen regions, and if she had not found means to oblige the children to take part in it. She was bent on having everything for dinner that Captain Mannering had ever said he liked, and as (to use her own expression) there was something awkward in the east wind that made her eyes water for nothing, and her head feel as light as a feather, she was continually forgetting something she wanted, and being obliged to send the children on messages here and there to rectify her mistakes.

Just as Harry was making himself miserable in the hall by looking at the fishing-rods, and wondering how long it would be before he and his father would go out fishing together again, she poked her head through the green baize door to beg Harry to run down the garden and gather her a handful of parsley, for Lanty was *that contrary* he would bring in nothing but peppermint; and then five minutes after, when Alice and Arthur were whispering sorrowfully together on the stairs, she appeared again to send Alice to the store closet for another pot of currant jelly, and to coax Arthur to come into the pantry and help to blanch almonds for desert. "Did they think she had a hundred pair of hands and feet," she wanted to know, or "did they take her for a steam-engine that could shuffle itself up and down for ever without being tired?"

Arthur thought Betsey might be taken for a steam-engine that day, she puffed out such strange groans and sighs as she bustled backwards and forwards, and had, at once, such a fiery and watery look about her face. It relieved his sadness considerably to wonder how she managed to look so odd. It certainly was not from crying, he supposed—she protested so vehemently that she could not see anything in the Captain's going away on a pleasant voyage for anyone to cry about, and she said so strongly that she should have no patience with Master Arthur if he did not get a bit of colour in his cheeks, and look like himself by dinner-time. What was the use of her slaving herself to make puddings if they were all to spoil their appetites by fretting? She was doing her best for them, and she warned Arthur that she should just expect them to do something for themselves, and that she should know how they had behaved, and how grateful they were to her, by what came down in the dishes from table after dinner.

Arthur was very anxious that Betsey should not think him ungrateful, but his efforts to do justice to the dinner were not successful. He thought he should never be able to bear the sight of plum pudding and raspberry cream again, and it was a great relief to him to perceive that Lanty, taking advantage of the general pre-occupation, was making large onslaughts on the scarcely tasted dishes as he carried them through the hall. It was very considerate of Lanty, Arthur felt, and he had no doubt he was doing violence to his own feelings by these efforts to save them from being disgraced in Betsey's eyes, for he had hitherto seemed to take Captain Mannering's departure to heart almost as much as the other children did. He had made Arthur miserable by the pictures he drew of what poor master would suffer when once he was out at sea, and he treated with great contempt all Arthur's attempts to make him take a more cheerful view of Captain Mannering's probable position on board ship. More than once he suggested that the Captain should run away and hide himself, and he was much disappointed when Arthur assured him solemnly that such a plan was quite impracticable, and that there would be no manner of use in his proposing it to his father.

Harry, who felt that he had had his share of his father's confidence during their walk across the mountain, kept out of the way on the last evening, and left the two coveted seats, on the arm of his father's chair and on the footstool at his feet, to be occupied by Alice and

Arthur. Meanwhile, he wandered about the silent house and peeped into all the rooms and closets, with a vague idea that he was looking to see that none of his father's possessions were likely to be left behind. When, in the course of his investigations, he reached the kitchen, he surprised Betsey sitting among all the unwashed dinner things, with her apron over her face, rocking herself slowly backwards and forwards on her chair. She seized on him and made him sit down by her, and listen to a long string of stories about the times when Betsey was a young nursery-maid, and when Captain Mannering, or Master Charles, as she called him, was the forwardest freest-spokenest young gentleman as ever was, who always stood up for his Betsey when some nursery tyrant (Harry could not quite understand who) was disposed to treat her like a negro slave, which she was not, as Harry might see still, Betsey said, by looking at her.

The anecdotes were most of them very old friends, which Harry seemed to have known ever since he was born, but to-night they were mixed up with mysterious hints and insinuations which he had either never heard or never noticed before. Connecting them with his father's remarks, he now listened more curiously than he had ever yet done to Betsey's revelations of old times, but he did not gain much enlightenment from them. Betsey stoutly refused to answer any questions, and from her way of putting things it was impossible to make out whether it was she herself who might now have been living at her ease in a grand house, with as many servants as she pleased to wait on her, instead of slaving single-handed with such a hindrance as Lanty always at her heels, or whether it was Captain Mannering who ought to have had these advantages. Lanty naturally enough kept out of the kitchen while Betsey was in a state of mind so likely to produce storms, but Harry was somewhat surprised to find that the evening's occupation he had chosen for himself was standing on one of the hall chairs, and peering inside the clock, nor could he quite account for the chuckle of intense delight Lanty gave when, on hearing Harry's step, he shut the door of the clock-case quickly and scrambled down to the ground again.

"What have you been doing with the clock, Lanty?" Harry asked.

"Wid the clock is it, Master Harry?" said Lanty, rubbing his head in a puzzled way. "Well, I was just asking it how it had the heart to go on tickin' so fast, when it knows as well as I do, the baste, that



LANTY AND THE CLOCK.

every one of its ticks brings the bad minute nearer when master will have to go away. 'Whist, can't ye?' I said to it in a whisper; but ye hear how it goes on tickin' for the bare life, as if it *wanted* mornin' to come; and the master windin' it up wid his own hands every Saturday night!"

The prayer-bell rang at this moment, and Harry preceded Lanty into the dining-room, feeling very solemn as he reflected that another evening would not find his father in his usual place, and that to all the regularly succeeding events of the coming days something would be wanting. He found it very hard to get through his verse of the Psalm properly when his turn for reading came, and was very glad when the last good-nights were exchanged and he was safely shut up in his little bed-room at the top of the house. He thought he should cry a good deal when he was alone, and might please himself, but somehow he did not. He had to undress quickly because Betsey had given him a very small piece of candle; and when he was in bed a difficulty about how a book-case he had made for his father could be hung in the cabin of the *Sea Lion* occurred to him, and before he had solved it satisfactorily he fell asleep.

It was not so easy for Arthur to follow his example; even on ordinary nights he could not tumble into sleep in a minute as Harry could, and he had never been so wakeful in his life as he felt that night, though he had promised his mamma to shut his eyes directly he got into bed. He did shut his eyes, but it was of no use; all the uncomfortable stories that Lanty had ever told him came back into his mind; he squeezed his face quite down into the pillow; but he had been trying to keep from crying all day, and now the sobs and tears would come. By and by he heard the door open softly, and some one crept up to the side of the bed. Arthur feared he had disturbed his mother, and, swallowing down his tears, he sprung up briskly, prepared to say that all was right with him, and to pray her to go back to her room. To his great relief, however, he perceived that it was only Lanty who was standing by his bed-side; and Arthur could see, even by the light of the rushlight in the passage reflected through the door, that nothing was amiss with him, for there was a broad smile on his face, and he looked unusually satisfied with himself.

"What do you want here, Lanty?" Arthur whispered.

"Master Arthur, darlint, I've done it," Lanty answered in the same

tone. "Shure I've been thinkin' all day that some one else in the house would be beforehand wid me; but sorra one of ye have had the grain of sinse but meself. It's all me own doin'; so Master Arthur, darlint, dry yer eyes. Ye'll all be as happy as kings or fairies at dinner-time to-morrow, when ye sit down all together to finish the plum puddin' ye would not eat to-day, and master *not* gone."

"But what are you thinking of, Lanty? Papa will be far enough away by dinner-time to-morrow. He goes by the train that leaves the station at six o'clock. Betsey has promised to call me in time to see him before he goes; but what are you laughing at, Lanty? You don't think she'll be so unkind as to forget to call me? Papa will not go away without seeing me?"

"Whist, and I'll tell ye, Master Arthur, only I've told ye once before and ye did not believe me. Betsey won't call ye early to-morrow mornin', for she won't wake herself; I've stopped the clock and the alarum by putting pebbles cleverly into the works, and I've put back master's watch two hours, and to make all shure, I've stolen the house-door keys from master's dressing-room, and thrown them clane out of the pantry winder, among the holly bushes, where ye won't find 'em again in a hurry. Master won't be able to get out of the house even if he wakes in time. The train 'ill start, and the ship 'ill sail widout him, and we'll keep him safe here among ourselves, only ye'll not let out that it was Lanty Clancy's doin', or maybe I'll be murdered intirely, Master Arthur, dear. Shure it was to hinder you and the mistress from cryin' yer eyes out I schamed it."

Arthur had been gradually extricating himself from the bed, till his bare feet touched the floor. "Oh, Lanty! what have you done?" he said. "Will you never understand?"

"Shure, it's yerself that hasn't a grain of understandin', Master Arthur; ain't ye been frettin' yer life out becace master was goin' away, and yet ye've niver invinted the laste taste of a plan, good or bad, to chate him into staying at home aisy."

"As if papa would be cheated into staying at home easy when he is wanted on board his ship; or, as if mamma and I had not rather cry our eyes quite out than try to prevent his doing his duty. It's very odd that you don't understand us better than that, Lanty. I wonder whether you ever will. But now I'll tell you what we must do to-night. You and I must keep awake till morning and call Betsey, instead of

the alarm. As soon as it is light enough, you must creep out of the pantry window, and search for the door keys till you find them. There will be no use in your pretending that they are not to be found, for papa would break the door open rather than not go, and we would all help him. I shall go downstairs when I have called Betsey to tell him that his watch is wrong, that he may get up in time ; but I won't say that you have anything to do with it."

Arthur seated himself resolutely at the bottom of his bed, cross-legged, as he spoke ; and though Lanty assailed him with many remonstrances and some actual tears, he was firm in his determination not to lie down again. Lanty sat on the floor opposite to him, and the keeping awake all night resolved itself into a succession of uncomfortable naps, from which they were continually roused by falling forward and knocking their heads violently against each other. Harry woke partially every now and then, and asked in a drowsy voice what the row was, and why Arthur did not get into bed, and dropped off to sleep again before he was answered.

Betsey was very cross with Arthur for coming three times to her room between the hours of two and five to entreat her to get up. The third time, however, though she protested it must be the beginning of the night, since no hour had struck since she got into bed, and no alarm sounded, she consented to rise and dress herself, more from dislike to seeing Arthur standing with bare feet on the cold attic floor than for any other reason.

Captain and Mrs. Mannering could hardly believe Arthur's incoherent story about the clocks having been stopped—they thought he had been dreaming ; but they were so thoroughly awakened by the vehemence with which he asserted the fact, that they were in no danger of going to sleep again. Once thoroughly awake, Captain Mannering did not require a watch to tell him the time of day ; he knew the aspects of sky and sea at every hour of the day and night too well for that.

The door key was found, the early breakfast partaken of, and all necessary preparations made, when the carriage that was to take Captain Mannering to the station drove up to the door. Lanty helped to put the luggage upon the carriage roof, and got some angry shoves from Betsey for pausing in his work while he peered down into the hall at his master and the children, who were taking leave of each.

other there. He wondered, as he noticed Arthur's tearful face, whether he did not now regret that he had not given in to his plan. It was so queer of people, Lanty thought, to do what they evidently disliked very much themselves, without making the least effort to shirk it.

Arthur caught a very bad cold from sitting up all night, and was unwell for some time. His illness very much increased the gloom in the Carnellen household, and caused a dismal sort of irregularity about lessons and everything that was very trying to Harry and Alice. When their mamma saw how unhappy they were, she sent them out a great deal into the open air together, and so it sometimes fell to Lanty's share to sit in the drawing-room and read to Arthur, when Mrs. Mannering chanced to be busy. Arthur was content on these occasions to listen to very baby-books that he had really done with several years before, but which just suited Lanty's powers of reading and comprehension.

The interest to Arthur was hearing what Lanty thought of the incidents in the story, and trying to put some of his odd fancies concerning them straight for him. The arguments that followed these explanations were not very good for Arthur's cough. They usually ended in Lanty's keeping to his own opinion, and remaining sure that he knew a deal better than Master Arthur.

Yet before Arthur was well enough to go out again, and the family had resumed their usual habits, Lanty had received one or two new thoughts into his mind that made the puzzle of people's choosing to do what they disliked because they thought it their duty less incomprehensible to him than it had once been.

He even found himself feeling glad instead of sorry when Arthur was pronounced strong enough to run about and play as usual, and he had to return to his ordinary tasks of digging potato beds and weeding among the spring vegetables under Evan Evans's directions.

[*To be continued.*]



WAR AND THE DEAD.

WAR AND THE DEAD.

(A Dramatic Dialogue, from the French of Jean Macé.)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PEACE.

WAR.

A FRENCH GRENADIER.

A GERMAN HUSSAR.

A SCOTCH HIGHLANDER.

A COSSACK.

A RUSSIAN PEASANT WOMAN.

A FRENCH PEASANT WOMAN.

A GERMAN PEASANT WOMAN.

AN ENGLISH PEASANT WOMAN.

SOLDIERS *are lying on the ground.* PEACE *is seated at the back, leaning her elbow on one knee, her head resting on her hand.*

Enter WAR.

WAR. To-day is the 18th of June, the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo, the day of a wrath which still mutters, and of a hatred yet unappeased. Let us employ it in reanimating this torpid century, which succumbs to the coward sweetness of an inglorious peace. After forty years of forced repose brighter days seemed at last to have returned to me. Twicedid I unfurl the old colours in the breeze; twice I made hearts beat as of old at the magic din of battles; and twice that hateful Peace, rising suddenly before me, snatched the yet rusty sword from my hands.

Up! up! O heroes of great battles! you whom twenty-five years of warfare did not satiate: rise from your graves and shame your degenerate successors. Up! up! bid some remember that they have a revenge to take, and tell others that they are not yet enough avenged.

PEACE rises.

PEACE. What do you want here, relentless War? Dispute the world of the living with me if you will, but at least respect the peace of the grave.

WAR. I have a right to summon the Dead when it is in the name of their country.

PEACE. The Dead are with God; they have but one country among them.

WAR. You may dispense with set speeches, most eloquent Peace, for I pay no attention to them. I go forward, and leave the talk to chatters. The world belongs to the brave.

PEACE. The world belongs to those who are in the right. Since, however, you will not listen to me, you shall hear the Dead them-

selves, and see if they agree with you. [*Turns to the DEAD.*] Arise, my children; come and confound those who wish to fight with the bones of the departed.

The DEAD rise.

GRENADIER. I have slept a long time since Austerlitz! Who are you, comrades?

HUSSAR. I come from the battle-field of Leipsic, where the great German race broke the yoke which your Emperor had laid upon it.

GRENADIER. You were left upon the field?

HUSSAR. I am proud to say so.

GRENADIER. And you are right, old fellow; every man owes himself to his country. We others have done just the same. If you had let us alone in '92 we should not have come to you.

COSSACK. I was killed under the walls of Paris, where great Russia went to return the insult she had received at Moscow.

HIGHLANDER. I fell at Waterloo, avenging the great English people for the threats of the camp at Boulogne. I drowned in my blood the last effort of your imperial Eagle.

GRENADIER. Well! we are well matched. My blood reddened the plain of Austerlitz, where the great French nation was avenged on Brunswick and Souwaroff. We have all perished, buried in a triumph. We can shake hands upon it.

COSSACK. Brave men are equals, in whatever dress. Let us shake hands.

HUSSAR. We have all died for our country. Let us be brothers.

HIGHLANDER. Let us be brothers. The hatreds of earth do not extend beyond the grave. [*They join hands.*]

GRENADIER. And now Peace is proclaimed, let us tell each other what we used to do before we became warriors.

COSSACK. I cultivated a piece of ground in the steppes and took care of my old mother.

HIGHLANDER. I brought up my daughter by farming a piece of ground which I had cleared on my native heath.

HUSSAR. I lived with my wife on the piece of land which we cultivated.

GRENADIER. I tilled a piece of ground also, and supported my sister. It seems that we were all four of the same way of life. How did we come to kill one another?

COSSACK. The Czar spoke, and I marched.

HIGHLANDER. Parliament voted for war, and I marched.

HUSSAR. Our princes cried, "To arms!" and I marched.

GRENADIER. As for me, my comrades cried, "To arms!" and I put on my best sabots. But after all, what have we against each other? Where was the quarrel between our respective ploughshares? [*To the HUSSAR.*] You, for instance, who began, what did you come into my country for?

HUSSAR. We came to destroy brigands.

GRENADIER. Brigands! That is to say, my unfortunate self, and other labourers like you and me. After this, well might we be made to sing about

"Vile blood soaking our furrows."

I see now this "vile blood" was yours, my friend, and that of brave men like you. Cursed be those who forced us to fight together!

HUSSAR. Cursed be the contrivers of War!

WAR [*advancing*]. Shame on you, degraded warriors! Your very wives would disown you. [*The DEAD gaze fixedly.*] You are silent! What have you to answer?

PEACE. The Dead do not reply. [*Points with her hand to the stage entrance.*] These shall answer for them.

Enter Four Veiled WOMEN.

[*One of the Veiled WOMEN slowly advances. When in front of the stage she lifts her veil, and is seen by the audience. The others afterwards do the same.*]

FIRST WOMAN. Oh my brother! where are you now? If you are ill, who nurses you? If you are wounded, who watches over you? If you are a prisoner, who comforts you? If you are dead — Alas! Every night I go to rest weeping, because I have had no news of you; and every morning I awake dreading to receive it. We were so happy! we lived so comfortably together! and now I sit at our little table, with your empty place before me, and cannot eat for looking at it. Yet I made you promise to come back when we said good-bye. Ah! Unkind! Why are you so long in fulfilling your promise?

[*She closes her veil and crosses to one side of the stage. The others afterwards do the same.*]

GRENADIER. It is my sister, friends. She is repeating the words of our last adieu.

SECOND WOMAN. Oh my father! why have you left your child? Alas! when you went away I played—poor fool!—with your brilliant uniform. (Dark livery of death, would that I had never seen thee!) I said I should be proud of you when you came back to me, having killed a great many of your enemies. Child that I was to speak of killing, not knowing what it meant! And now, when will you return? What have they done with you, dear father? What has become of that revered head, which my lips never approached but with respect? Perhaps at this very moment it is dragged, all stained and livid, through the dust or in the mud. Oh God! if my prayers may still avail for him, withdraw him speedily from those frightful conflicts, where every blow falls upon a father, a son, a brother, or a husband. Pity the many tears that flow for every drop of blood!

HIGHLANDER. It is my daughter! I yet hear the last farewell her innocent mouth sent after me.

THIRD WOMAN. Oh my beloved! where can I go to look for you? Little did we think, when we vowed before God never in this life to forsake each other, that War would come and carry you away as a leaf is driven before the wind. Perhaps at this moment you are stretched upon an armful of bloody straw, and other hands than mine dress your glorious wounds. Ah miserable me! of what does my tender jealousy complain? Who knows if you are not by this time safe from wounds for ever? Oh my God! if Thou hast taken him, take me also. I promised to follow him when I received his parting kiss.

HUSSAR. It is my wife beyond a doubt! I recognise the words her sweet voice murmured that very day in my ear.

FOURTH WOMAN. I said, "Go, and bear yourself like a man." He went, and he has not returned. Ah merciless tigers! we rear our children with fear and weeping. We pass whole nights bent over their little cradles, and when we have made men of them you come and take them away from us that you may send them to death. And we, miserable women! must encourage them to die if we would not have them dishonoured. Poor dear boy! so strong! so handsome! so good to his mother! Ah! if there be a God of vengeance, surely the cries of desolate mothers will allow no sleep to those who provoke such massacres. They will haunt them to the grave, and rise behind them to the foot of that Throne where the great Judge of all awaits them.

[She buries her face in her hands.]

COSSACK. It is my mother! I recognise her last words. [*He springs towards her.*] It is I, mother, it is I! [*She raises her head.*] What do I see? A stranger! and it is an Englishwoman!

HIGHLANDER [*raising the daughter's veil*]. Good heavens! She is a German.

HUSSAR [*raising the wife's veil*]. It is not she! It is a French woman.

GRENADIER [*raising the sister's veil*]. She is a Russian! It is not for us that they are weeping; perhaps it is for some of those whom we have killed. How could we be so deceived?

PEACE [*advancing*]. There are sisters, wives, daughters, and mothers everywhere, my children, and Nature has but one language in all countries. [*To WAR.*] As for you, go and sound your trumpet in barracks and drinking-houses, but invoke the Dead no more, and do not reckon upon women.

J. H. G.

NOTE.—The battle of Austerlitz was fought December 2, 1805. The battle of Leipsic, August 16–19, 1813. The Allies took Paris March 30, 1814.

A SHILLING'S WORTH OF WONDER.

CALLING one summer afternoon at the cottage of a village friend, a shoemaker, my eye was caught by the sight of a very unusual nosegay in a jug on the table; not that a nosegay in that house was at all an uncommon sight, for my friend was a very intelligent man, and particularly fond of flowers; moreover, he had a little daughter who, though rather invalided at times, had a strong taste in the same direction. But this particular nosegay was a decided puzzle, for certainly none of the lanes in the neighbourhood could have furnished the flowers, and I doubted whether any gardens within reach had grown the magnificent rhododendrons, two handsome branches of which adorned the flower jug. But that was not all: besides these and a fine piece of yellow laburnum, there were two flowers I had never seen before; one was like laburnum in shape, but of a pinkish stone or dull red colour, the other purple, of a much deeper hue than the rhododendrons, and grew on a branch which had the stiff straight growth of a broom branch. I expressed my admiration of the rhododendrons, and was not surprised to hear that they came from the grounds of a country seat

in the neighbourhood, which happened just then to be uninhabited, the family having bought an estate in another part of England and gone away; but looking at the other flowers, I remarked that I could not imagine what they were, and asked the shoemaker what sort of shrubs he had gathered them from, owning that I had never seen them before. The man smiled, and said they were a curiosity, for he had picked them both off a laburnum tree. "Off a laburnum tree?" I repeated, thinking I had misunderstood him. "Impossible!"

"Impossible." How free we poor creatures, limited to an allowance of five senses, are with that word! But the force of habit overrules one's more serious philosophy, and I told my village friend he must have made a mistake, or rather, I believe I asked him the question in several different ways in order to bring out the fact that he had done so; which pertinacity induced him to tell me the whole story of his obtaining the wonderful flowers.

Some friend had told him there was a curious tree in the hall grounds, and the two had gone together and found it, and he assured me he had seen the yellow and pink laburnums growing together among the branches, while here and there patches of the purple flower stood out in shrubby tufts—"tussocks" he called them—as if they had fallen on the branches from the skies.

I listened and looked, and we stood over the flower jug together, and my friend went on to ask me how I thought it had happened; he and his friend had been considering that perhaps the bees had carried the seeds of some other plant to the laburnum tree, or could it be the birds?

I said, "Well, perhaps; but it was very odd they should have taken two sorts of seeds to one tree; still such an accident might happen—at least I did not know that it might not." These and a few other such inane remarks I made, as people usually do when they are talking upon subjects they know nothing of, but at last I shook my head and acknowledged my utter ignorance. As I did so, however, I still kept looking at and handling the flowers, my strongest feeling being one of uncertainty as to the fact itself—not that I doubted the shoemaker's believing what he said when so decidedly spoken, but I was far too much of a naturalist to accept the statement without ascertaining its truth for myself; so, having obtained the best account I could of the road to the tree, which he explained was in a wild and unfrequented part of the grounds, I took an early opportunity of going off on the quest. It proved a

weary search, and I and my young companion made many mistakes, but at last arrived at a little grove of laburnum trees, at the top of a hill overlooking a fine view. We were almost in despair at the time, we had walked so far in vain, and at first sight could detect nothing but "laburnums dropping wells of fire" of the usual golden hue. At last, however, we gave a shout. On one side of a low wall the bending branches all bore yellow flowers, but on the other there were among the yellow ones several of the pinkish stone colour I had seen in the cottage. It cannot be said that they were more beautiful than the yellow ones, but the mixture was most curious as well as pretty, and our point was gained. The tree had been grafted of course, said I. But how little that told! for not being a botanist or horticulturalist, I did not trouble myself to wonder with what. The search for the purple flower was a much longer affair, and again and again we agreed that our good friend must have been mistaken about *that*; but after staring upwards at all the trees round till our necks ached, we uttered shout the second. On one of the bending branches high out of reach of the same tree where the dull-red blossoms grew, we caught sight of a strange-looking tuft, standing out as if it had dropped on the tree by an accident, or burst out from it with some strange disease, all the lower part of the branches of the tuft being covered with the bright purple flowers I have described.

"Extraordinary!" was my next exclamation, for "Impossible!" was now out of the question. I could only reach two sorts of flowers, it is true, to gather them, but the third was looking down at me from an unmistakable laburnum branch.

What was to be done next? My companion and I talked for a bit of bees and birds, and the wonderful changes in flowers produced by insects in their wanderings. This was idle talk, however, and I soon bethought me of the scientific friend who was certain to be able to solve the difficulty, unless it really was an unprecedented case. To him, therefore, I wrote at once, and received for answer that it was a very curious but very well known affair. Come, then, *extra-ordinary* was no such bad term after all! and now for the history of the Wonder.

"It is said," wrote my friend, "to have originated in a Dutch or Belgian nursery, where on a *Laburnum* stock had been grafted a *purple Cytisus* (which is of the same genus as *Laburnum*).

"Now, from the spot where the *graft* entered the *stock* came a *bud*,

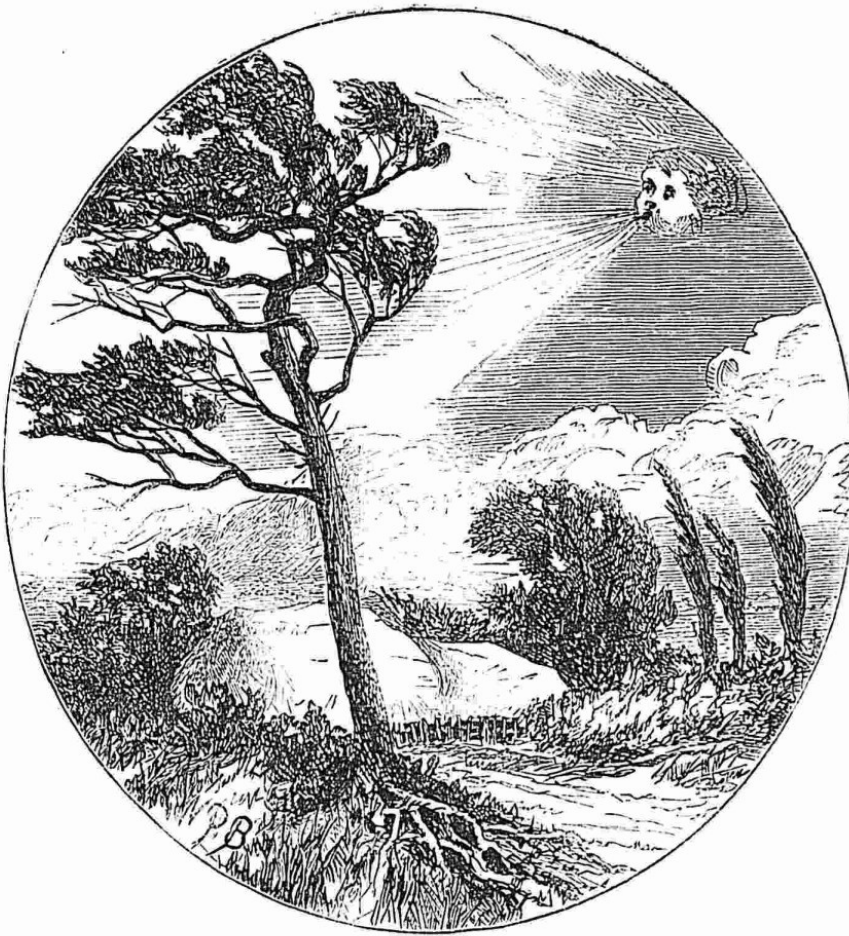
which seemed to combine the properties of both *bud* and *stock*, for when it blossomed it bore *dull-red flowers* such as had never been seen before.

"*Buds* from it were grafted on other laburnum stocks and grew, and *these* have the queer property of breaking out *irregularly* either with purple, yellow, or dull-red flowers, each flower being accompanied by its own proper-shaped leaves and twigs. I don't understand it in the least," my friend went on to say, "and there is no similar monstrosity on record. But truth is stranger than fiction. The bees have nothing to say to it so far as we know." And then came the conclusion, "You can buy a plant for your garden at any London nursery, and it ought not to cost more than a shilling or so."

To be had at a nursery garden for "a shilling or so." What a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous! The "impossible wonder" come down to an "extraordinary fact;" the extraordinary fact to "something very curious;" the something very curious to be had at twenty places in London for "a shilling or so!" Why, half the civilised world would cry "impossible" to its being curious at all even, if it is to be had so cheap. Well, they must say what they please. We, with our poor five senses, make very free use, as I said before, of the word "impossible," but equally so of the word "commonplace." Those who have looked into nature long enough and deep enough, know how wonderful are even the commonest facts of that silent magic world. The seeds, the plants, the flowers, tell no tales; but very nearly everything they do, or that happens to them, is "impossible," if our being able to account for it is to be the test of what is possible.

The utmost, in fact, that we can really attain to is to know what is common and uncommon within the limited sphere of human observation; and that the growth of the *Three-flowered Cytisus* is uncommon there can be no doubt, even though London nursery gardeners may sell it at a shilling or so the plant. Oh, in talking over these wonders of nature, what a thought is the revelation in store for us hereafter! If even now, seeing through a glass so very darkly in the physical as well as moral world, we behold wonders and beauties which make our very souls leap with longing for a clearer light and deeper insight, what will the full unfolding be? Verily eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the glories which shall one day burst upon the vision of those who have loved and adored their great Creator here below.

EDITOR.



“SECURELY ROOTED.”

“**B**LOW wind, and crack your cheeks!”—but it is in vain. You may bend the outer branches, it is true, for it is their nature to be gentle and yielding, and they do not much care to resist you; but each has a counterpart root in the soil below, and by these the tree holds fast in spite of you. This is no house built on the sand—no pretty branch stuck in the ground for mere show’s sake, for the first blast to overthrow. The tree makes a beautiful show, no doubt; she “stretches out her branches to the sea, and her boughs to the river,” and her foliage is a pleasant sight to look upon; but she would perish from off the face of the earth in the first storm were this all—were it not that for every outward grace she displays there is a deeper corresponding life below the surface. So are these outside developments not outside developments only, but witnesses of something more enduring beyond.

Young readers, who rejoice to deck yourselves in the outward graces of virtue, and live in the smiles and approbation of the world, beware of cultivating outward graces only—be sure there is the deeper corresponding life within the heart.

Only when “securely rooted” can the tree stand fast in the storm.

The Bell-horses.

Words and Music by F. E. C.

First system of musical notation. The vocal line (treble clef) is in 3/8 time and contains the lyrics: "Bell - horses, Bell - horses, what time of day? It is". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a bass clef. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4. Pedal points are marked with 'x' in the bass line. A 'ped.' instruction is present in the piano part. An asterisk (*) is placed above the final measure of the piano part.

Second system of musical notation. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "six by the clock, a bright morn-ing of May, It is". The piano accompaniment continues with similar fingerings and pedal markings.

Third system of musical notation. The vocal line concludes with the lyrics: "six by the clock, a bright morn-ing of May." The piano accompaniment includes a trill in the final measure of the vocal line.

Fourth system of musical notation. This system contains the piano solo section. It features complex fingerings (1-4) and pedal markings (x) across both the treble and bass staves.

Dark i - ron grey, and their num-ber twice twain, Still

on-ward they plod with that close-co-ver'd wain,

Firm-ly and e-ven-ly tread-ing the ground, Still

ped.

on-ward they go to the bells' tink-ling sound.

First system of musical notation. It consists of three staves: a single treble staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass) below it. The music is in 4/4 time. The top staff has a whole rest. The grand staff contains a melody with various fingerings (4, 2, x, 4, 2, x, 4, 2, x, 3, 2, x, 1, 3, x, 1, 2, 3) and some notes marked with 'x'. The bass staff has a simple accompaniment with notes and rests, including a final whole note chord.

Chorus to last verse.

Through Win - ter and Sum - mer, and Au - tumn, and

Second system of musical notation. It consists of three staves. The top staff has a melody with notes and rests. The grand staff below it has a melody with fingerings (4, 2, 3, 4, 2, 4, 3, 3, 2, 1) and some notes marked with 'x'. The bass staff has a simple accompaniment with notes and rests, including a final whole note chord.

Spring, O Bell - horses, Bell - - horses, how your bells

Third system of musical notation. It consists of three staves. The top staff has a melody with notes and rests. The grand staff below it has a melody with fingerings (x, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1, x, 1, 2, x, 1) and some notes marked with 'x'. The bass staff has a simple accompaniment with notes and rests, including a final whole note chord. A 'ped.' (pedal) marking is present in the bass staff.

ring!

Fourth system of musical notation. It consists of three staves. The top staff has a melody with notes and rests. The grand staff below it has a melody with fingerings (x, 2, 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, x, 1, x, 1, 3, x, 2, 1, 3, x, 1, 2, 3, 4) and some notes marked with 'x'. The bass staff has a simple accompaniment with notes and rests, including a final whole note chord.

Bell-horses, bell-horses, dark iron grey,
 'Tis the height of midsummer—O! what time of day?
 Mists of the morning hot noontide forebode,
 As they tramp, as they tramp on the dusty highroad:
 Green are the pastures the highway that bound;
 Still onward they go, and they look not around.

CHORUS.

O! bell-horses, bell-horses, what time of day?
 It is six by the clock—they are off and away.

Bell-horses, bell-horses, dark iron grey,
 It is dull dark November—O! what time of day?
 Chill is the dawning, with cold drizzling rain;
 The clouds they are gathering o'er hill and o'er plain;
 Close to the highway may shelter be found;
 Still onward they go, and they look not around.

CHORUS. O! bell-horses, &c.

Bell-horses, bell-horses, dark iron grey,
 'Tis the depth of midwinter—O! what time of day?
 All in the dark, when I'm snug in my bed,
 On come the four greys, as I know by their tread:
 Ice in the ditches, and snow on the ground;
 Still onward they go to the bells' tinkling sound.

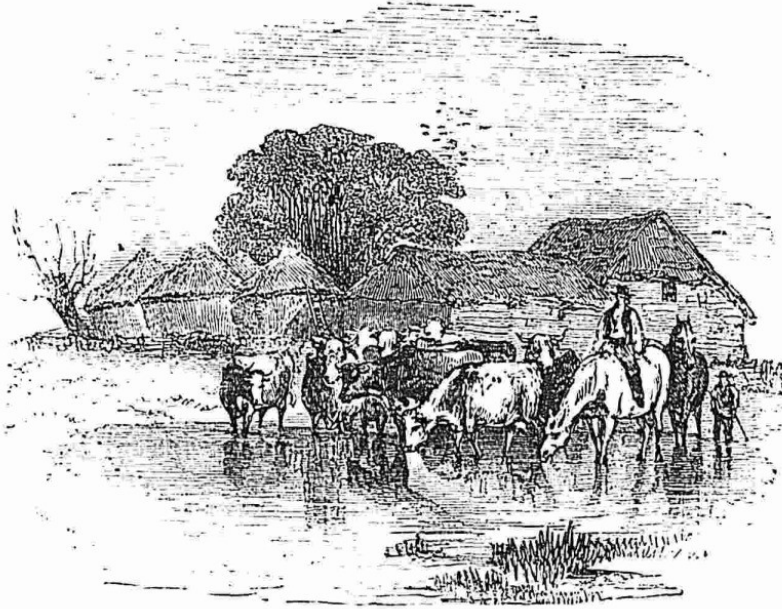
CHORUS. O! bell-horses, &c.

Winter and summer, and autumn and spring,
 O! bell-horses, bell-horses, how your bells ring!
 Careless what treasure its stores may contain,
 Still onward they drag that dark close-cover'd wain;
 Firmly and evenly treading the ground,
 Still onward they go to the bells' tinkling sound.

CHORUS.

Through winter and summer, and autumn and spring,
 O! bell-horses, bell-horses, how your bells ring!

OCTOBER MEMORANDA.



OCTOBER is another of the six months to which Romulus gave names according to their places in the calendar; and this, being the eighth from March, was called October, from the Latin word for eight, *Octo*. The Saxon name was Wyn-monat or Wine-month: on which Verstegan remarks: "Albeit they had not anciently wyne made in Germanie, yet in this season had they them from diuers countries adioyning." On the other hand, mention is made in Domesday-book of vineyards in several counties in England, and in one case "vine-dressers" are mentioned. This looks as if our Anglo-Saxon ancestors manufactured their own wine. It must have been very scarce, however; and Turner quotes the answer of a Saxon lad to the inquiry what he drank as, "Ale if I have it, or water if I have not;" with the addition, on being further questioned as to why he did not drink wine: "I am not so rich that I can buy me wine, and wine is not the drink of children or the weak-minded, but of the elders and the wise."

Another, and probably more ancient, Saxon name for October, was Winter-fylleth, because

they considered this month the beginning of winter; and there is a record of the winter of the year 763-4 in which the frost began on the 1st of October and lasted to February.

October 26, A.D. 901. On this day died one of the best princes that ever sat on the throne of this or of any other kingdom. Of all those to whom history has accorded the title of great, by none has it been better merited than by Alfred the Great of England, and the renown of few famous men is at all points so bright as his. "He possessed and cultivated every virtue, public and private, belonging to a man, a Christian, and a king. . . . He saved his people in war; ruled them firmly in peace; and gave them just laws and the light of learning. And all this he did chiefly by first training and governing himself. His time was divided into three equal portions: one for sleep and bodily exercise; one for business; and one for study and devotion. To measure his time he invented the plan of burning candles of certain lengths in lanterns. By such self-discipline, the same man who gained in fifty-six battles (by land and sea) the fame

of Founder of the English Monarchy, became also the Founder of English Literature. He himself translated the histories of 'Orosius and Bede,' Boethius's 'Consolation of Philosophy,' and many other works; and he invited celebrated scholars from the continent. He founded schools, and enjoined their use. The arts of wealth and common life were equally promoted by him. He encouraged commerce and manufactures; devoted a seventh of his revenue to public works; and invited ingenious foreigners to settle in the country." He acquired learning by no royal road, for he complains that of all the troubles of his life this was the greatest—that when he had the "age, permission, and ability to learn, he could find no masters." And this is saying a great deal when we think of the many misfortunes which fell to his share in life. His kingdom was not consolidated till after long and anxious struggles with fierce enemies, during which he was at times outcast, and subject to great hardships. The story of his baking the cakes in the cowherd's cottage is too well known to be repeated here. But all children may not know, that on his restoration he amply rewarded the peasant, whose name was Denuif, for his scanty hospitality; for, observing him to be a man of capacity, he recommended him to apply to letters and to assume the ecclesiastical profession, and finally made him Bishop of Winchester. Bishop Denuif died in 909. To return to King Alfred and his troubles. His life was greatly afflicted by disease: an internal malady, which the Saxon physicians could neither understand nor alleviate, tormented his days with ceaseless suffering, which must have overpowered the energies of a commoner man. In spite of which the range of his tastes and acquirements was wonderful. He was a poet, a sportsman, a musician, and distinguished for his genius in the arts of architecture, ship-building, and gold and silver workmanship. He was once married, and there seems reason to believe that his queen (who had shared his adversity) was worthy of him. They had six children. Of his moral and religious character, perfected more and more as life went on, his friend and historian, Asser, repeatedly speaks. In his ear-

nest efforts to conquer his besetting failings, he sought help from where alone it could be had. His daily attendance on divine service, his frequent solitary hours of private prayer, occasionally in the churches at night or in the early morning, evince the depth of his sincerity. One other characteristic we recommend to the notice and imitation of his young countrymen. An author of the period of the Norman conquest, writing of Alfred, adds to his name this epithet (probably traditional)—"the truth-teller." He lived fifty-two years; then the painful troublous life ended in peace; the soul that in a dark age had striven so hard for knowledge went back to the Fountain of all Wisdom; and on the 26th of October, 901, the spirit of England's greatest king passed to its everlasting rest. He was buried at Winchester.

"Why will ye not," says Alfred, "ask after the wise and worthy, such as they were that lived before you? and why will ye not then, after you have inquired into their customs, listen to them the most earnestly you may? For they struggled after worship in this world and toiled for a good fame by good works, and wrought a good example for those that should be after them. Hence they now dwell above the stars in everlasting blessedness."

October 8, 1361. Duel between the Dog of Aubry de Mondidier and his Assassin.—"Aubry de Mondidier," says the French account, "passing alone through the forest of Bondy (a great wood not many miles from Paris), was assassinated and buried at the foot of a tree. His dog lay several days upon the grave, and only left it when driven to extremity by hunger. He went straight to Paris, to the house of an intimate friend of the unfortunate Aubry, and by his dismal howlings did what he could to announce the sad event to the family. They offered him food, which he ate, but immediately after recommenced his cries; then walked to the door, turning his head to see if he was followed; then went back to his master's friend and pulled him by his cloak, as if to make him come along with him. The singularity of the dog's actions, his arrival without his master, whom he never willingly left, the sudden disappear-

ance of that master, all combined to induce the friend to follow the dog wherever he might lead. Of course the poor animal led the way to the tree, and, having reached it, redoubled his howlings and cries, at the same time scratching the earth with his paws, as if to signify that there was the place to be searched. The ground was dug accordingly, and the body of the unfortunate Aubry was brought to light.

"Some time afterwards the animal caught sight, by accident, of the assassin, whom all historians have called the Chevalier Macaire, and made such a spring at his throat that it was with great difficulty the bystanders could induce him to let go; and time after time, whenever they met, he attacked and pursued him with the same fury. This viciousness of a dog who was savage to no one else seemed extraordinary, and began to be talked about. People recollected his devotion to his old master, and also that Macaire had several times betrayed a strong hatred of Aubry. Other circumstances increased the suspicions thus aroused, and at last they reached the ears of the king, who sent for the dog, and had him introduced into the room where he himself was standing surrounded by courtiers. The beast was perfectly quiet at first, but on seeing Macaire in the group, to the number of twenty, in attendance, he turned, barked, and flew forward to throw himself upon him as usual; so that there could be no doubt of his having some special cause of anger against that particular man.

"Now, in those days, if a man was accused of a crime, and the proofs of his guilt or innocence were not sufficiently convincing, it was the custom for a combat to be ordered between the accuser and accused; it being firmly believed that God would not suffer an innocent man to be wronged even in this world, and that the guilty one—whether criminal or false accuser—would infallibly be overcome by the other. These battles, or duels, were called God's judgments; and, on the present occasion, the king was so struck by the circumstances which pointed to the guilt of Macaire, that he decided to subject him to the trial by battle—that is, he issued orders for a duel between the knight and the dog.

"The lists appointed for the combat were set in Our Lady's Island, now a part of Paris, but then only a wild, uninhabited bit of ground. Macaire was armed with a huge stick, and the dog had a barrel to retreat into and spring from.

"The time arrived, and he was let loose: when he at once sprang forward and ran round his adversary, avoiding all his blows, and threatening to attack him, first on one side and then on the other, till he had wearied him out, on which he leaped upon him, seized him by the throat, threw him over, and pinned him down: and so, having got the mastery, obliged him to confess his crime in the presence of the king and all his court, who had assembled to look on, as was the custom on such occasions. A picture of this battle was painted on one of the chimneypieces of the grand saloon of the Castle of Montargis, and hence the story is often called 'The Dog of Montargis,' under which title it was dramatised, and brought out at the London theatres some forty or fifty years ago."

This touching and romantic tale is, however, somewhat traditional, and historians even differ as to the reign in which it occurred. A story is told by St. Ambrose and others of a murder at Antioch detected by a dog under similar circumstances, long before the day of the "Dog of Montargis;" and in Walter Scott's "Talisman" a dog is made the detective.

October 12, 1492. Columbus and his followers landed on Guanahani, or San Salvador, one of the Bahama Islands. Take out your map of the world, my dear young friends. Within the left of those two circles lies the mighty continent of America, in comparison with which this country of England looks very tiny indeed. And yet England seems large to us who live in it. It holds a great many towns, a great many villages, and a great many happy homes. There are many places in England which you have not seen, and never may see. This gives you some idea of the vastness of the American continent—the Western World, as it is sometimes called. Now, think that less than 400 years ago the greatest and wisest men knew nothing of this great Western World, of which you know a great

deal perhaps, and of which you have maps and puzzles; in the upper half of which English is the spoken language, and a part of which (called Canada) is subject to our own Queen. Think that at the present day that wonderful cable which lies in the blue waters of the Atlantic Ocean will take a message from England to the far-off Western World in the course of a few minutes! And then think of this: Four hundred years ago Don Christopher Columbus, of Portugal, laid before his king and countrymen his reasons for believing that there was land beyond the Atlantic Sea—in fact, a Western World—which he asked for ships and money that he might go to find. His ideas were laughed at, and help was refused. For eighteen years he hoped in vain; and then Queen Isabella of Spain took up the cause with generous enthusiasm, and with three vessels and 119 companions Columbus set forth upon his voyage of discovery. He was a man of enthusiastic temperament and strong religious feeling. Before his departure he partook of the Holy Communion with his officers and men, and, amid “devout and affecting ceremonials,” set sail on his great enterprise early in the morning of Friday the 3rd of August, 1492. But the anxieties of poor Columbus were far from being over. The hearts of the sailors failed them as soon as they lost sight of the Canary Islands—the last stage of the expedition of which they knew anything. Great, indeed, must have been the hope which upheld their leader through the complaints and doubts and fears of his ignorant companions. Sometimes they thought that the wind in these seas might always prevail from the east, and so that they should never return to Spain; sometimes that the sea was growing shallow, and that they might run aground in mid-ocean and perish without rescue. Once they were wonderfully cheered by the appearance of some little birds who came singing in the morning and flew away at night. The birds, they observed, were too small and feeble to have flown very far unexhausted—land must be near. In spite of this, however, their impatience rose to absolute mutiny. On the 25th of September one of them imagined that he saw land; and indeed,

so delusive was the appearance, that Columbus knelt in transport, and the crews joined in chanting the *Gloria in Excelsis*. But in the morning their hopes faded—it was but a bank of evening cloud. Amid such cares and disappointments, indomitable in one lofty purpose, Columbus sailed for two long months over seas that seemed to have no end, seeking the unknown land in which he believed. When dawn broke on the morning of the 12th of October, and he saw before him the green and luxuriant shores of one of the Bahama Islands, his feelings must have been such as we can hardly understand. He was a man of tall and dignified presence, and as, richly dressed in scarlet, bearing the royal standard, and attended by officers bearing the banner of the enterprise, emblazoned with a green cross and the initials of the sovereigns of Spain, he landed on the shores of the New World, the natives may be excused for believing, as they did, that this imposing band was an embassy from the skies. On touching ground Columbus “threw himself upon his knees, kissed the earth, and returned thanks to God.”

It should be said that, though Columbus was the first to proclaim to the world at large the existence of a world beyond the Atlantic, he was not the first European who had reached America. The ancient Scandinavians had colonies in Greenland and on the eastern coasts, and the Welsh prince Madoc is said to have formed a colony on the coast of Virginia.

October 21, 1805. Battle of Trafalgar.—“Lost to his country, 21 Oct. 1805, aged 47,” is the simple record inscribed inside the hoop of the funeral rings distributed after Lord Nelson’s death to his relations and a few special friends. Outside is engraved his Peer’s motto, “*Palmarum qui meruit ferat*”—“Let him bear the palm who deserves it,” occupying rather more than half the circle, the remainder being formed into a raised tablet, on which are the viscount’s and Italian duke’s coronets, worked in coloured enamel and gold on a black enamel ground, the initials N. & B. (Nelson and Bronte) below them, and the word TRAFALGAR underlying all. It is a beautiful ring. Even modern taste could scarcely have gone beyond it in simplicity and refinement.

And now of this Nelson, "the saviour of the silver-coasted isle," whom out of very depth of affection one loves to call simply "Nelson," in spite of coronets and titles. Not from a dislike of titles or the grudging him his, but because we feel a great man not only nearer and dearer, but almost greater, by his own name alone than with any prefix of honour. Such names become titles of honour themselves; they fossilise into honour, so to speak, as the Nautilus shells of the Old World have fossilised into the enduring marble of our museum Ammonites.

And, as regards Nelson, there exists the element of an unusual warmth of affection. All who really knew him bore witness to his lovable nature—the candid, open, daring, generous, genial spirit—the tender heart; and yet the mind so acute that his intelligence seemed the inspiration of genius. For details of his career we will refer our young readers to Southey's life of him, and, if their interest deepens, to Sir Wm. Beattie's account of his last hours. All we can do here is to speak a very little of his last crowning victory—this battle of Trafalgar.

Trafalgar is the name of a promontory on the coast of Andalusia (in Spain), to the west of the Straits of Gibraltar; and it was off that cape, on the 21st of October, 1805, only five weeks after he sailed from England, that Nelson came in sight of the combined fleets of France and Spain about ten miles off. The long, vainly-sought opportunity of bringing about a decisive naval engagement was at last at hand. At daybreak on Monday, the 21st of October, the combined fleet of the enemy, French and Spaniards, was descried from the deck of the *Victory*, at about ten or eleven miles distant to the south-east, Cape Trafalgar being about seven leagues off in the same direction. This day was an anniversary in the Nelson family; and the admiral had more than once said to one who tenderly watched over his last hours, "the 21st will be our day." The captains had all received their instructions, which were embodied in one sentence: "No captain can do wrong who places his ship alongside that of an enemy." "Close

action" was Nelson's favourite signal when the time of action came. His fleet, therefore, bore down under a light breeze upon the enemy, who awaited them in a well-formed line that became slightly curved as the wind veered. Nelson's division of the fleet stood for the enemy's van, whilst Admiral Collingwood, in the *Royal Sovereign*, steered directly for the centre of their line. At half-past eleven the action commenced by the enemy firing upon the *Royal Sovereign*, and twenty minutes afterwards they opened their fire upon the *Victory*; having discharged at her as she approached single guns, until they found she was within range of their shot, when they poured in their broadsides, maintaining an awful and tremendous fire. Before the *Victory* returned a shot she had fifty killed or wounded. At four minutes past one she commenced firing from both sides of her deck on the enemy; and one who was on board her told us that the first double broadside seemed almost to lift the *Victory* out of the sea. Almost wedged in betwixt the *Santissima Trinidad* (of 136 guns) and the *Bucentaur* on her larboard and the *Redoubtable* on her starboard side, the *Victory* suffered from the heaviest fire which those three ships could pour into her, and from the rigging of the *Bucentaur* came the fatal bullet which laid low the great naval hero. Thus fell "the greatest sailor since our world began;" and we have rather dwelt on the details of the terrible engagement because naval warfare, in its awful necessity, is not likely henceforth to be carried on at such close quarters, nor are we likely to have an admiral of the fleet so simple, generous, skilful, and brave as the great Nelson. Let his words, written at Port Mahon, November 15, 1799, animate the young who are struggling on any path of duty: "Thus may be exemplified by my life that perseverance in any profession will most probably meet its reward. Without having any inheritance, or having been fortunate in prize-money, I have received all the honours of my profession, been created a peer of Great Britain; and I may say to the reader, Go thou and do likewise."—ED.